

THE LONDON READER

of Literature, Science, Art, and General Information.

THE RIGHT OF TRANSLATION IS RESERVED.]

[REGISTERED FOR TRANSMISSION ABROAD.]

No. 206.—VOL. VIII.]

FOR THE WEEK ENDING APRIL 20, 1867.

[PRICE ONE PENNY.]



ALEXINA.

CHAPTER VII.

Be not dismayed—fear nurses up a danger,
And resolution kills it in the birth.

Phillips's "Duke of Gloucester."

Dark night, that from the eye his function takes,
The ear more quick of apprehension makes;
Wherein it doth impair the seeing sense,
It pays the hearing double recompense.

Shakespeare.

WHEN Lord Ashcroft re-entered the drawing-room of Egremont, after his strange adventure upon the sea, he discovered that his absence had not been especially remarked. Lord and Lady Egremont had been called from the apartment, the Lady Lorean and Lyle Indor were seated in a distant corner conversing in low tones, and the Lady Alexina still remained at her piano, evoking strange, beautiful melodies and grand bursts of harmony.

His lordship approached her, and was welcomed with a smile and bow which failed to yield him the pleasurable sensations they would have done an hour previously.

There was everything to satisfy his taste for beauty, and to call forth his admiration for their fair owner. The fire blazed merrily in the great handsome fireplace; the glittering chandeliers glowed steadily with mellowed radiance; and the Lady Alexina, in her robe of ruby velvet, and with her splendid jewels, looked like a being of another world. Her dark hair shone like satin, her cheeks wore a ruddy glow, and her dark eyes sparkled, out rivaling the gems she wore.

But Lord Ashcroft was now scarcely entranced by her beauty.

His thoughts dwelt upon the slender, girlish figure of the spectre he had beheld at the window of the haunted room, outlined by the strange spectral light, and that weird, sweet song she had sung continued to ring in his ears, closing them to the soulless music of his betrothed.

There was a vein of romance in his lordship's

[THE MYSTERY OF BOREMONT.]

character, and it found ample gratification in the story of the Lady Jasmine, and the events he had so recently witnessed.

He was momentarily tempted to relate his adventure to the heiress, but he noticed a cold, apathetic look upon her features that was sufficient evidence she would have little sympathy with him, and he resolved to keep his own counsel, and to watch for a second appearance of the mysterious spectre.

Lord and Lady Egremont soon reappeared, and the Lady Lorean and Lyle Indor joined them, making a pleasant family party.

The Lady Alexina ceased playing, and Lord Ashcroft aroused himself from his abstraction, engaging her in conversation.

He felt assured that he had now an excellent opportunity to judge of her mental capabilities, and he set about the task with considerable interest.

It proved however to be more difficult than he had anticipated.

The heiress possessed a showy, superficial character which had received a high degree of polish, and it was not easy to look below the surface, without having had a longer and more intimate acquaintance with her. She was well read, but that was more to the credit of her faithful governess than to her, and she found herself at home upon most subjects where deep thought was not demanded. Her mind was a receptacle for other people's ideas, and not a laboratory where those ideas should serve as material for grand and original conceptions. Of the great questions of the age—in which Lord Ashcroft, as an earnest thinker, was greatly interested—the heiress was profoundly ignorant, but she was versed in all the light accomplishments of the day, could converse in French, and sing in Italian, and these acquirements were ranked above all others in her mind and in the minds of her guardian and his lady.

Although Lord Ashcroft did not understand the maiden's character on this occasion he learned enough to awaken within him a slight feeling of dissatisfaction at his lot, which but the evening previous he had thought so promising of unalloyed bliss.

Alexina did not seem to grow dearer to him. It

was true that she relaxed from her usual imperiousness and endeavoured to render her manner gracious, but to her betrothed there seemed something of condescension in her bearing, and he did not admire in one so young her air of queenly majesty and self-importance.

The evening wore away pleasantly. Lord Ashcroft welcomed the hour of retiring, eager to be alone.

When it came at length and he went up to his own apartments, where fire-light and lamp-light united to render the scene full of pleasant home-comfort, he sat down and gave himself up to reflection.

His mind did not dwell upon the regal beauty of his betrothed, but upon the weird and spectral scene he had witnessed, and he occupied himself with various plausible conjectures as to its cause and meaning.

"What foolishness," he said, at last, smiling. "That superstitious old sailor has infected me with his notions, I think. The thing admits of a very simple explanation, without doubt. The spectre, the ghastly light, the menacing hand, the fearful cry, all are perhaps effected by some fun-loving housemaid, who is delighted with the sensation she creates among the fishermen along the coast. But that unearthly singing. It is harder to believe that a housemaid could sing like that than to believe it the utterance of an angel. I imagine that they must sing like that in Paradise, with voices as sweet and free and celestial;" and his lordship's tene became dreamy, as if he lived over again the ecstasy with which he had listened to it. "There was so much refinement and culture in every tone that it would clearly be a miracle if a housemaid sang that quaint old song. I can take either horn of the dilemma I prefer, since a miracle is involved in either case."

The more he thought upon the matter the more confused his mind became. He recalled all the instances he had ever heard of great singers who had been born in humble life, and then finally mused:

"This actress, who performed for my edification to-night, is clearly a musical genius. I ought to seek her, or ask Lorean to do so, that she may have every advantage she may desire and win fame and

fortune. If her present position be humble, she must no longer be permitted to blush unseen, or bury her priceless talent under a bushel."

With this benevolent resolve he endeavoured to discard the subject from his mind.

The singularity of the occurrence, however, continually forced itself upon his attention, and, in self-defence, he was obliged to retire to his bed, in the adjoining chamber.

The bed-room was lighted by a hanging lamp, but, before taking possession of his couch, Lord Ashcroft turned off the light and parted the damask window curtains.

The night was intensely dark without, neither moon nor stars now being visible, and the wind blew with a freshness that betokened an early storm. The waves could be heard beating restlessly against the base of the rock upon which the mansion stood, and moaning and dashing over the ledge with terrible force.

"An unpleasant night," said his lordship, turning from his contemplation of the blackness without to the brightness within, and placing the door opening into his sitting-room ajar. "It will be delightful to lie in bed and listen to the battle between the winds and the waves. I hope," he added, "that the fishermen are all housed, for a fearful storm is blowing."

He went to his couch, flung off his dressing-gown upon a chair beside it, laid his watch and purse, as was his custom, upon the small French stand at his bed's head, beside his decanter of drinking-water, and then sprang lightly into bed.

He found himself in a delightfully easy nest, with the finest of linen, the softest of eider-down, the most yielding of springs, and within a pleasantly warm temperature.

It was agreeable to be there and watch the play of fire-light upon the walls of the room, or that section of it revealed by the partly open door, and Lord Ashcroft indulged in the gratification.

But after a short time he drew about him the silken curtains draping his bed, and shut out all sights and nearly all sounds, except the howling of the winds around the mansion and the steady ticking of his watch, which sounded with unusual distinctness because placed upon marble.

And then he sank into a dreamy state which was neither sleeping nor waking, and the chief sensation he felt was a vague pleasure in hearing the winds rave without and his watch tick steadily beside him. An hour—two hours—thus passed.

His dreaminess had deepened into a light slumber, in which all consciousness was not lost, and his breathing had become regular like the breathing of a profound sleep.

Suddenly, although he did not open his eyes or change his steady respiration, every sense became active and alert, and he was broad awake.

A simple thing had aroused him.

He had missed the ticking of his watch.

It was a handsome one, of the best maker, and he had used it for years without having discovered a single fault in it.

That it had stopped of itself now he did not believe.

But what could have happened to it?

He listened intently.

For a moment he persuaded himself that he still heard its ticking, although so faintly as to suggest that it had been removed from the marble-topped stand and muffled in cloth, but the impression was momentary.

Not the slightest sound within his chamber was to be heard.

The very stillness was oppressive.

And now came over his lordship a sense of danger that was inexplicable.

A weight seemed upon his limbs, his heart quickened its beatings, under that mysterious foreboding, and he opened his eyes in vague expectation of beholding something terrible.

But his gaze rested only upon the ample folds of the bed drapery that enclosed him.

He was a man of courage and of the greatest presence of mind in sudden dangers, as had been shown more than once in his adventurous yacht-cruisings, and these traits were at his command in the present emergency.

Without reasoning upon the subject, he felt convinced that he was at that very moment in deadly peril.

Why, or at whose hands he did not take time to inquire.

Exercising his firm, resolute will, he called up all his energy and alertness, banishing the weight that had momentarily benumbed him, and stilling the tremulous beatings of his heart.

His first impulse was to bound from his bed and search his room—his second, and the one which he obeyed, was to remain perfectly quiet.

He remembered the murderous assault in the fir

plantation on his journey to Egremont, and the thought then occurred to him that possibly another attempt was about to be made upon his life.

In that case, what should he do?

He had no weapons at command but his strong, stout arms, and upon them he depended for safety.

Suddenly he thought of a fact that he had observed before retiring.

There were two bell-ropes in his bed-room, and one of them was hung just within his bed-curtains.

With a slow, cautious movement he put out his hand towards it, careful not to make the slightest noise, and simulated the breathing of a sound sleeper.

The next moment he made a startling discovery.

The cord had been cut near the top!

This discovery was proof sufficient of his great peril, and he gently drew back his arm and awaited the next attitude of affairs.

His breathing had been suspended but a single moment, and that during the shock of finding the cord cut, but he now regained his self-possession, and debated in his own mind what he had best do.

He was still thinking when he heard a faint sound in his room—a token of another presence there than his own.

There might be more than one man there, he thought, and they would be well armed. To attempt to dash past them would be to rush upon certain death. To be still would be worse.

His resolve was taken.

Keeping a vigilant watch upon his curtains, alive to the faintest sound, suppressing his breathing to the lowest possible pitch, and with the utmost caution and noiselessness, he gradually arose in his bed and slipped out at its head, standing erect between the couch and its drapery.

He had scarcely done so when the sound he had heard was repeated.

His lordship drew himself up and awaited the result.

Suddenly—so suddenly as to startle him, there having been no promontory warning but that faint sound—the curtains were gently parted and an arm was thrust within the opening, the hand grasping a murderous-looking knife.

Lord Ashcroft remained silent.

The arm looked brawny and large, and the hand was encased in an old and stained leathern glove.

Nothing was to be seen but that sinister arm, except an evil-looking eye that gleamed through the parting in the bed-curtain above, although its glances rested only upon a deserted bed.

The fact of its desertion was evidently not apparent to the assassin, for with a sudden and nervous movement he struck out his arm, plunging his knife into the bed at the spot where his victim's heart should have been.

A smothered curse came from the lips of the assassin as he discovered his failure.

That imprecation still lingered upon his lips, his hand still grasped the knife, when Lord Ashcroft, with a tiger-like spring, leaped from his hiding-place upon him.

The assassin gave a startled cry and turned to flee.

Catching up his dressing-gown, Lord Ashcroft started in pursuit.

The would-be murderer rushed into the parlour, pulled open the door leading into the corridor, and as he did so his pursuer noticed his form distinctly, the fire-light being clear and bright.

The face he could not see.

Through the dimly lighted corridor, down the broad staircase, through the lower hall, went the pursuer and pursued, with a clattering noise that sounded fearfully loud at that hour, and, as they passed into the vestibule opening on to the portico, his lordship noticed that the outer door was ajar.

Even as he made the discovery the intended assassin dashed through the opening, and out into the pitchy blackness of the night.

Farther pursuit was useless.

As his lordship acknowledged this reluctantly to himself the fresh night wind brought to his ears a mocking laugh and the words:

"Better luck next time!"

Lord Ashcroft thought seriously of rushing out in the direction from which the voice came, but remembering the state of his toilet, closed the door and went back to the staircase, upon the upper step of which lay his dressing-gown, where he had thrown it in his anxiety to capture his intended murderer.

He caught it up and put it on, subduing his excitement as he heard one or two doors open on the upper corridor, and then composedly walked on towards his room.

He had not taken a dozen steps ere the Lady Lorean rushed out from her room, and Lord Egremont emerged from his, both startled and frightened.

Lord Egremont carried a pistol, and was followed by his lady, who appeared alarmed.

"What is the matter?" cried the host, excitedly.

"Is it you, my lord? I—I thought—"

"Oh, what is it, Lionel?" cried his sister, running towards him and clasping her arms about him. "I thought I heard someone pursuing someone else."

"Hush, Lorean, there is no need of fear now, dear. I was pursuing someone."

Lady Egremont groaned and caught her husband's arm.

"I beg your ladyship not to be alarmed," said Lord Ashcroft, astonished at her manner. "The man was quite alone. I pursued him out of the house and closed the door upon him. He cannot intrude again to-night."

"The—the man!" said Lady Egremont, hysterically.

"Yes, your ladyship, the same, I think, who shot at me in the plantation. He was in my room with murderous intent a few minutes since."

The Lady Lorean uttered a faint shriek, and sobbed convulsively, pressing her brother's hand as if she would never more permit him to leave her.

"Oh, I wish we were back at Ashcroft, Lionel," she exclaimed. "Your life was never in danger there, and here you have been twice attacked."

Lord Egremont came forward, his features working with emotion.

"My lord," he said, "your life is as sacred to me as my own—more sacred, in fact, for with yours is connected that of my dear ward. The words of the Lady Lorean are perfectly natural, but they have stung me to the quick. This assassin who has twice attacked you shall be immediately discovered, I pledge you my honour. Did you think him to be the same as before, Gosman Kepp?"

"I have not yet come to that conclusion, my lord."

"In that case my duty is plain," said Lord Egremont, resolutely. "I must convince you that the assassin is not an inmate of the mansion. Your lordship secured the outer door?"

Lord Ashcroft assented.

Lord Egremont passed into his chamber and touched his bell-pull, in consequence of which summons a servant appeared and received an order, at which he departed wondering.

A few minutes later the great bell of Egremont, that was used only on special occasions, and which had been originally designed to summon the tenantry to the defence of the mansion in feudal times, was rung with a subdued peal that awoke every sleeper within the dwelling.

"Let us go down to the lower hall, my lord," said Lord Egremont as sounds of commotion began to be heard.

Lord Ashcroft assented and conducted the Lady Lorean below, Lord and Lady Egremont following them.

In a few minutes they were joined by the Lady Alexina, who seemed greatly alarmed, and by Lyle Indor, whose anxiety seemed relieved on observing that the members of the family were all gathered there, and by a host of wondering servants, in every variety of costume.

The general impression seemed to be that Egremont was on fire, but that idea was immediately dispelled by Lord Egremont, who called upon his housekeeper and butler to declare if every servant in the family employ was there.

They were all there, as was soon ascertained, from the Lady Alexina's French maid to the lowest scullion employed in the kitchen, and not one of them showed any signs of guilt or confusion.

"Does any one of them resemble your assassin, my lord?" whispered Lord Egremont.

Lord Ashcroft answered in the negative.

Allaying the curiosity of the servants by stating the principal facts in the case, Lord Egremont dismissed them to their beds and prepared to hold a family consultation.

"I cannot make out anything from your story, my lord," said the Lady Alexina, addressing her guardian. "Won't Lord Ashcroft tell us how it all happened?"

Her betrothed proceeded to do so, giving a full account of his recent adventure.

"How singular," said the heiress, without betraying any sensibility at his lordship's marvellous escape from a violent death that he had a right to expect.

"The stopping of the watch is decidedly strange," said Lyle Indor, thoughtfully. "Evidently the assassin took it. His chief motive, doubtlessly, was plunder."

"I do not quite agree with you," said the Lady Lorean, resuming her usual calmness. "He desired his motive to appear what you think it, but if he wanted plunder why didn't he retreat with it? Why did he stay to kill a man whom he supposed to be sleeping?"

"I cannot answer your question—I wish I could," said Lyle Indor. "You may be right, yet who should wish to kill his lordship? Whom has he ever wronged that anyone should seek vengeance?"

"No one," said the Lady Lorean, warmly. "This

is the most cold-blooded and inhuman outrage I ever heard of. That anyone should wish to kill Lionel; the very idea is horrible!"

"Your ladyship is right," said Lord Egremont. "This occurrence is perfectly terrible. I do not see," he added, with a shudder, "that by seeking to wed an Egremont he brings the doom of the race upon himself. It was never so before. The ladies of Egremont have wedded with the noblest and the best, and their husbands have always been unharmed. To settle the discussion suppose we examine your rooms, my lord, and search for some trace of this fellow. As he left in such haste he may have dropped some article that will serve as a clue to his identity."

Lord Ashcroft bowed assent and conducted the party to his rooms.

The parlour showed no signs of any occupant save its rightful ones, and Lady Egremont, the Lady Lorean, and the heiress, remained there by the fire, while the gentlemen passed into the bed-chamber.

The Lady Alexina was the most composed of the three.

Looking at her calm brow and unmoved face one would not have supposed that it was her intended husband who had so narrowly escaped a frightful death.

She seated herself in an easy-chair, and began improving her hasty toilet during the interval of waiting for her guardian's report.

Lady Egremont sat with clasped hands, staring vacantly into the fire, and continually murmuring to her guest her distress at the unfortunate occurrence, and hoping that the assassin would be captured soon.

The Lady Lorean, in a tumult of impatience, only awaited her brother's return to her.

A cry from the inner room, the sound of three masculine voices in concert, aroused the ladies, and the two elder ones sprang up as Lord Egremont joined them, crying out:

"We have found a clue. The man left his knife in the bed. Just look at it!"

He displayed a cheap, common knife, and at the sight of it the Lady Lorean uttered a shriek and sought her brother's side, clinging to him with frantic energy.

Lord Egremont exhibited the weapon to each member of the party. "I never saw a more wicked-looking thing in my life. Just observe the point of it, and the edge! The fellow was really in earnest, whoever he was."

"To think such a thing could have happened at Egremont!" murmured Lady Egremont, nervously. "I would have given anything that it had not happened here!"

"So would I, Evelyn," responded her lord; "but Lord Ashcroft cannot blame us for what has occurred. We have not harboured the man who aims to kill him, and I shall leave no means untried by which to bring him to justice. My lord," he added, addressing Ashcroft, "did you see any resemblance between the assassin of to-night and Gosman Kepp?"

"The size and general appearance were very like," answered Lord Ashcroft, reluctantly. "As I said, my lord, I did not see the man's face to-night. I could not declare him to be Gosman Kepp, and my suspicions must have no weight in the matter."

"Kepp shall be arrested to-morrow!" declared Lord Egremont.

"I beg that he may not, my lord—or, at least, not until I have had some opportunity to verify or refute my suspicions. We will discuss this matter farther in the morning. I desire to think it over to-night!"

"Very well, then, my lord," responded his host, "we will come to no conclusion to-night. Perhaps in the morning you may be able to throw some more light upon the subject, or remember something which, though slight in itself, will bring the guilty person to justice."

"I think we have kept Lord Ashcroft long enough from his bed," said Lady Egremont, putting her arm in her husband's. "Had a guard not better be placed at his lordship's door, Evart?"

"Certainly, my dear. If Lord Ashcroft would prefer his own servants—"

But Lord Ashcroft interposed, negating the proposition, and declaring that he felt quite able to defend himself.

While this discussion was going on Lyle Indor withdrew, but soon returned, saying:

"There is a pistol, my lord, that I took to Italy two years ago. I never had occasion to defend myself against the brigands, so the weapon has scarcely been used. I think it is better than nothing, and you will favour me by keeping it until your cowardly assailant is secured!"

Lord Ashcroft regarded the pretty useless thing, thinking how appropriate it was to its effeminate owner, and that he should greatly prefer for his own use the gun he had captured in the plantation, but he

thanked Indor courteously, and deposited the pistol in his waistcoat-pocket.

Lyle's thoughtfulness procured him the thanks of Lady Egremont and Lady Lorean, and the host then moved towards the door.

The Lady Alexina had not yet arisen from her chair, but, with her head reclining, and her dark tresses floating about her, she looked beautiful enough to touch even Lord Ashcroft's heart, and he stood beside her in the hope that she would congratulate him upon his continued safety, or say something expressive of interest in his welfare.

"Come, Xina!" said Lady Egremont.

The heiress arose, encountered fully the glance of her betrothed, and returned a look so inexplicable that it haunted him for days after.

Then taking the disengaged arm of her guardian she left the room.

Lyle Indor and the Lady Lorean followed, and Lord Ashcroft was alone.

"How strangely Alexina regarded me," mused his lordship, ensconcing himself in the chair Lady Egremont had occupied. "She looked as though she were disappointed because I was not killed. What a ridiculous idea! She was weary and sleepy; besides, she could not show her real feelings before her friends. She told me she did not wish to release me, nor wish that I should release her, from our compulsory engagement. She loves no one else, and she is willing to marry me. It is all right—yet I wish I hadn't seen that look!"

CHAPTER VIII.

O how I grieve the grave this heavenly form!

Southera.

And then her look—oh, where's the heart so wise
Could, unbewildered, meet those matchless eyes?
Quick, restless, strange, but exquisite withal,
Like those of angels.

Moore.

LORD ASHCROFT was still musing upon the singular look of his betrothed when a light tap upon his door aroused him, and the Lady Lorean entered the room. She advanced to his side and sat down beside him, taking his hand in her own, fondling it as a mother might have fondled her child.

"Oh, Lionel," she said, with a shudder, as he did not speak. "I wish we could go home in the morning. You had better forfeit any amount of money than your life. Shall we not go?"

Lord Ashcroft shook his head, and demanded: "How can I go in honour, Lorean? I came here as the suitor and betrothed husband of the Lady Alexina—"

"And you will leave this place as a corpse!" she interposed. "I feel that you will. You said that that assassin cried out 'Better luck next time,' and that shows he has not given up his attempt to kill you. If you are so infatuated with Alexina, Lionel, why not invite the family to Ashcroft?"

"I do not intend to be driven away from Egremont," answered Lord Ashcroft, composedly. "I am not one to fly from danger."

"But the knife of an assassin is a danger that cannot be guarded against. It may strike you in a most unguarded moment. I fear you lack caution!"

"No, I do not, Lorean. I shall remain here, but maintain a constant guard. I have some curiosity to know why I should have been selected as a victim by this assailant of mine. I am not conscious of ever having injured anyone!"

"You—why, you would not hurt a fly! I've seen you step aside more than once to avoid trampling upon a worm. I am at a loss to know why anyone should wish to murder you. Can you have been mistaken for someone else?"

Lord Ashcroft replied in the negative.

"Did you think that to-night's assailant was the same as the other?"

"Yes. The man who entered my room to-night was the person who fired at me from the wood. I did not see his face upon either occasion, but his form and general appearance—to the very garments—were identical!"

The Lady Lorean breathed heavily, and pressed unconsciously the hand she continued to hold as she asked:

"Lionel, tell me truly, do you think this assassin was Gosman Kepp?"

"I do not like to answer that question, dear Lorean. You know I did not see the man's face, and could only judge from his general appearance. It is a terrible thing for a man to be thrown under suspicion of such a grave charge, and I have no wish to wreck the life of that young girl who loves him, or to darken his own, should he really be innocent!"

"But you doubt his innocence?"

"To be perfectly frank with you, sister, I do doubt it. The fact that that gun belonged to him, that he said he had lent it and yet could not tell the name

of the borrower, and his confused manner, served to render me suspicious of him. Yet he had an honest face, and that girl loved him—two things in his favour. So, you see, I hardly know what to think. I intend to call at his cottage to-morrow, before any tidings of to-night's occurrence can reach him from the family servants. I may be able to judge something then!"

"He may probably prove an alibi, you know, Lionel. If he slept at home his mother would be able to tell at what time he retired. But, then, he might have risen again and crept out without being seen by her. The case is full of mystery. Why should he wish to kill you? That question continually troubles me. Could he have been hired to do so?"

Lord Ashcroft started.

"Who should wish me out of the world?" he asked.

"I do not know," answered the Lady Lorean, thoughtfully. "Not Lord Egremont, for he is most anxious to bring about your marriage with his ward. I had a very confidential conversation with him to-day, and he told me that you had very kindly offered to see to his future, as he is dependant upon the income he derives from Egremont, and that will be withdrawn at Alexina's marriage. He is greatly attached to his ward, and has the greatest respect for you. His grief and mortification at these repeated attacks upon you were undoubtedly genuine."

"Undoubtedly, Lorean. Lord Egremont is beyond suspicion. And there is no one to be in any way benefited by my death—unless, indeed," he added, bitterly, remembering that strange look of the heiress, "it were the Lady Alexina!"

"But she loves you, Lionel, or, at least, is greatly interested in you. Lady Egremont told me so. I will do justice to Alexina always, although I shall take care not to repeat my injudicious comments upon her character." And the Lady Lorean sighed.

Lord Ashcroft was tempted to confess to his sister that his feelings towards his betrothed lacked the warmth of the previous day, and that he began to perceive defects in the being whom he had been prepared to make his idol, but he restrained the impulse.

As he had said, he felt bound in honour to the heiress, and he could not bear that even his sister should suspect that his future wife was not enshrined in the inner temple of his soul as its ordained and chosen priestess.

No, he could not tell even Lorean that he was disappointed in his betrothed, or that he was puzzled and baffled in his attempts to read her character.

"Alexina is undeniably beautiful!" he said, mediocrately.

"Yes, and she possesses the taste of a Parisian in dress. She will reflect great credit upon you, Lionel!"

Lord Ashcroft smiled sadly, for he had had visions of a home to which he could return from his parliamentary debates, and in those visions he had pictured a sweet-faced lady who should be the presiding genius, irradiate his home and his life, be his best friend and counsellor, and enter into his thoughts and aspirations.

But the imperious Alexina seemed fitted only to shine in fashionable society.

She could never be the angel of home.

"One must not expect too much, Lorean," he said, his smile fading. "But to return to our subject. I can comprehend nothing whatever in regard to these assaults, and I shall not use my suspicions against Kepp until they have received in some sort confirmation. You look weary and worn, dear sister," he added. "Had you not better retire?"

"I do not like to leave you alone, Lionel," was the anxious response. "That villain may return."

"I shall be watchful; besides, he would not attempt a murder twice in one night!"

"You will lock your door, won't you, Lionel? You know if you were to be killed my heart would be broken. Cherish your life for my sake, my dear brother. You are all I have—"

"Except the captain!" said Lord Ashcroft, playfully.

"I will be careful, Lorean, very careful, so do not be troubled about me."

He bent over her and bestowed upon her a kiss that was as much filial as fraternal, and then escorted her to the door of her chamber, returning to his own.

Forgetful of her injunction to lock his door, he stirred up his fire, supplied it anew with coals, and resumed his seat, sinking into a dreamy reverie.

His recent excitement had banished all desire for sleep, and he had no immediate intention of returning to the couch where he had so nearly met his death an hour before.

The gale still blew fiercely without, but the curtains had all been closely drawn, and the bright blaze of the coals combined to give the pretty parlour a very cheerful air.

There was no lamp-light, but the fire gleamed over the bright carpet and played upon the walls, giving that peculiar light conducive of thought and waking dreams.

And thus an hour passed.

The wind had increased its fury and howled along the rocks, the waves moaned restlessly in response, and the uproar of the elements was almost terrific.

"If the spirit of the Lady Jasmine walks at all she might well walk on such a night as this," mused Lord Ashcroft. "It is the very night for terrible deeds, for murders and horrors of every kind. Nature seems actually convulsed, and there is a terrible fury expressed in the shrieking of that wind. A bad soul must feel all its worst passions aroused to-night."

He leaned forward and stirred up the fire.

The noise made by the clashing of the poker against the bars of the grate prevented his hearing the gentle opening of his door.

But when he leaned back in his chair, in an easy attitude, he looked up, and uttered a cry of astonishment.

It seemed as though his muttered words had evoked the spirit of the murdered lady of Egremont—she whose body must have mouldered away a century before.

For there before his eyes stood a strange being.

This being possessed a slender, girlish figure—the same he had seen at the window of the haunted chamber—and a face that might well be deemed that of an angel.

There was something shadowy and unreal about her as she stood before the dancing fire-light, but Lord Ashcroft observed how pale, and pure, and cold seemed her lovely face, what sweet serenity was enthroned upon her fair young brow, and what a sad and mournful expression dwelt upon her lips.

Her eyes fairly entranced him.

They were almost supernatural in their dusky beauty, in which slumbered a world of unawakened passion and feeling, and beamed with a holy radiance that thrilled the observer to his inmost heart.

Her hair, as Lord Ashcroft noticed, was arranged in a quaint manner, such as he had observed portrayed in paintings of court beauties of a century before, and her dress, equally quaint, was made of a silvery fabric, that looked like woven moon-beams.

He feared to move or speak lest the airy vision should fade away.

As his admiring gaze dwelt upon her spiritual face a faint flush, like the tint upon a June rose, mounted softly to her clear cheeks, and her modest eyes drooped in momentary confusion.

Just so might the Lady Jasmine have looked years and years before.

It was but momentary, and then she looked up with a wild, startled glance that stirred Lord Ashcroft's pulses to quicker beating, a pleading look came into her pure, sweet face, and she clasped her hands together, as she had done at the window.

The observer noticed that her fingers were adorned with rings, set with jewels in the clumsy manner of olden times.

As he regarded her as one might a strange and lovely picture, the intruder wrung her hands in a silent, noiseless way, and her pleading look became passionate. Her eyes wandered over Lord Ashcroft's face in quick, restless glances, as if seeking to read his character, and at last met his own in a magnetic gaze.

And then his lordship attempted to arise.

Like a startled fawn, she stepped back to the half-open door.

Seeing that his rising would be a signal for her to flee, he resumed his former position, determined to allow matters to take their course.

He was not superstitious, but he could scarcely be blamed for doubting that the being before him was of flesh and blood. In her quaint, old-fashioned attire, with her pure, child-like face, she did not seem like a mortal, and it was not difficult at that moment and under those circumstances to believe that she was indeed the spectre of the murdered Lady Jasmine.

As she did not speak, his lordship said:

"Can I do anything for you, lady? Speak to me as to a friend, I beseech you!"

A mournful smile flitted over the intruder's face, she seemed upon the point of replying, when she suddenly lifted her hand warningly and stood in a listening attitude.

Lord Ashcroft listened too, but he heard nothing except the roar and tumult without and the beating of rain against the window-glass.

A moment the strange being stood, her hand uplifted and the drapery fallen back to her elbow, revealing an arm which for contour and colouring would have delighted a sculptor or a painter, and then she placed one long taper finger upon her lips as a warning to be silent—so Lord Ashcroft interpreted it—and then she seemed to melt away into the darkness.

His lordship believed that she disappeared through the door, and he sprang up and ran to it, looking out into the dimly lighted corridor, but she was not there.

There were passages branching off the main corridor, and he made a hasty examination of these, but the spectre had disappeared without leaving a trace behind.

Disappointed and mystified his lordship returned to his room and fire-side.

(To be continued.)

SCIENCE.

PROF. FARADAY stated that the chemical action of a grain of water upon four grains of zinc could evolve electricity equal in quantity to that of a powerful thunderstorm.

MENTAL AND PHYSICAL WORK.

OF all hard daily workers the heart and lungs are the most persevering. From day to day, from youth to old age, they toil away with scarcely a moment's intermission, and, gentle and almost imperceptible as their labours appear, the amount they get through is something enormous. The heart is a most powerful pump, throwing out at every beat five or six ounces of blood. In twenty-four hours it pumps out in this way a quantity which is estimated at from fourteen to nineteen tons, and the force which it exerts in doing so would be sufficient to raise fourteen sacks of coal to the top of the Monument! The lungs, too, the bellows of the animal machine, although they do not do more than one-tenth of the work the heart accomplishes, contribute very materially to the total. Other kinds of work are also being done in the body, the amount of which we are not yet able to estimate. Mental work, for instance, has been experimentally proved to be, in part at least, actual physical labour, exhausting the powers of the body as effectually, though not to so great an extent, as the more mechanical forms of labour.

The heat which a human being develops in a day varies exceedingly, and its amount has not been very accurately determined; but, for an adult in good health, and upon a moderate diet, we cannot be far wrong in estimating it as equal to the raising of five gallons and a half of water from freezing-point to boiling-point. Now the quantity of work which a definite amount of heat is capable of doing is perfectly well known. The heat that would raise one pound of water one degree Fahrenheit would, if it were employed in doing work, as it is in a steam-engine, raise one pound weight 772 feet—or, what is the same thing, 772 lb. one foot. Measured by this standard, we find that the heat which would raise five gallons and a half of ice-cold water to boiling-point would be enough to lift 3,412 tons one foot high; or, to put the fact in another form, to hoist 170 sacks of coal to the top of the Monument.

We can now classify, in a rude kind of manner, the chief varieties of work which are done in the body. It is not necessary for our present purpose to enumerate the less important kinds, and we therefore specify:

1. Heat Work.—This, we have seen, is the greatest in amount. It probably constitutes not less than four-fifths of the whole work of the body. 2. Internal Work, including, as the chief items, the action of the heart and lungs. 3. External Work.—The actual mechanical labour, performed, for the most part, under the direction of the will. Some kinds of external work cannot well be estimated, but on the whole we are able to make a fair approximation to the total amount. 4. Mental Work—as to the mechanical value of which we are still entirely in the dark, but which is probably inconsiderable in amount.

This classification, which is founded on one which has been adopted by Dr. Lyon Playfair, gives us a sufficiently correct idea of the different varieties of human labour. On one point, however, a little explanation is necessary. It may be asked, how can the multifarious kinds of work which men have to do be measured and referred to a fixed standard? The answer will be best given in the form of an illustration. A man who weighs 150 lb. works for three hours and a half on the treadmill. He constantly ascends, and although, from the revolution of the wheel, he remains where he was, the work he effects is the same as if he went up into the air. In three hours and a half he will have ascended 7,560 feet; and at the end of the time he will consequently have lifted the weight of his body (150 lb.) 7,560 feet. Now, lifting 150 lb. 7,560 feet is the same as raising 506 tons one foot, and we are therefore able to describe his work as 506 foot-tons.

By a similar calculation a man of 150 lb., who ascends the Monument, performs a little more than

twelve foot-tons of work; and as the labour of walking on level ground is about one-twentieth that of ascending in a straight line, his ascent is equal to a walk on level ground of about three-quarters of a mile.—*Macmillan's Magazine.*

MR. DANGER has succeeded in making photographic portraits on collodion so small that they were wholly invisible to the naked eye, and 10,000 portraits might be introduced into a square inch.

WHEN a ray of common light passes through a piece of gold-leaf inclined to the ray the light is polarized. When the angle between the leaf and the ray is small, about 15 deg., nearly all the light that passes is polarized.

THE colours of the stars have their origin in the chemical constitution of the atmosphere. The changes in the brightness of some of the variable stars are attended with changes in the lines of absorption of their spectra.

PLASTICITY OF ICE.—It has been found that ice in fragments, ice-dust, or snow, exposed to pressure, unites into solid and transparent ice; and, in this way, by means of suitable moulds, very beautiful and curious objects have been produced. The capability of frozen particles to unite under great pressure is supposed to explain the formation of glaciers.

ELECTRIC LIGHTS.—A trial was made a few days ago of M. Serrin's electric light, by placing two of these lights on the triumphal arch of the Place du Carrousel in Paris, in two enamelled glass globes, and though not dazzling, and even pleasant to the eye, their brilliancy was so great that, in the interior court of the Tuileries, one saw better than with all the gas lighted, whilst in the Place du Carrousel itself the gas was almost entirely eclipsed. The continuity and fixity of this light are wonderful, and if, when as is projected the railing of the Tuileries has been moved almost to the centre of the place, four or six electric lamps were placed above the railing, a simple, splendid, and most economical light would be procured.

A CHEAP BAROMETER.—A countryman in the neighbourhood of York has discovered a natural barometer, being no other than the spider's web. When it is about to rain and be windy the spider shortens considerably the last thread to which his web is suspended, and leaves it in this state while the weather remains variable. If the insect lengthens its threads it will be fine, and the fineness may be guessed by the length they attain to. If the spider remains inactive it is a sign of rain; if, on the contrary, it begins to work while it rains, it betokens a speedy change for the better. The spider alters his web every twenty-four hours, and if these alterations are made a little before sunset the night will be fine.

LEECH-FISHING IN AUSTRALIA.—Leech-fishing is carried on by the Murray River Fishing Company, the fishermen, it is said, turning their attention to leeches—as Mr. Micawber, in one of his many financial straits, "turned his attention to coals"—at unfavourable seasons for the ordinary fishery. "At such times," runs the account of the enterprise, "it is customary for a steamer of the company to take a trip down the Murray 100 to 200 miles, and the leeches are then gathered from the swamps, lagoons, overflows, and shallow anabranches of the river. From 150,000 to 250,000 leeches are sometimes collected in one of these trips. They are then packed and conveyed to Melbourne, where a large proportion of them are put up for transmission abroad. Large numbers of them are sent to London and Paris, where it is stated they are preferred to leeches brought from any other place.

HOW EIDER DOWN IS PROCURED.—A consular report of this year on Iceland gives an account of the way in which down is extracted from the eider duck. Early in June the bird, always repairing to the same spot, comes to some small holme or islet in the fjord and lays its eggs, after lining its nest with the down plucked from its own body. As soon as the eggs are laid the owner of the hatching-ground robs the nest of the down and a part of the eggs, both of which the poor bird replaces a second and a third time, when she is left in peace to complete the process of incubation, but with her body completely denuded of down. This method is adopted because the down of the dead bird loses its elasticity, and is of comparatively little value. The hen bird gives eight or nine ounces of down to a nest, but when cleaned the weight is diminished by half. The value of the cleaned down is about 19s. per lb. The annual produce in Iceland is valued at about 5,000*l.* In some instances one small holme will give its owner an annual income of 150*l.* Such is the care taken of these birds that during the hatching-season no guns are allowed to be fired in their vicinity. Foreign vessels arriving are forbidden to fire salutes.



[AMY'S ENCOUNTER WITH THE WATER-WOLF.]

THE WATER-WOLF.

CHAPTER I.

ANOTHER moment, and there came up out of the gallery in question, with a slow and shuffling gait, a monster so strange and terrible in its appearance that it was a wonder that Amy did not fall into a death-like swoon at the very first view.

In strangeness, in hideousness, it would have passed for the Satan of the brute creation.

It was not an alligator, nor a turtle, but a compound of these reptiles, with various features belonging to other reptiles and animals, the whole wrought into the most terrific and formidable ensemble that can be imagined.

Its body was as long and thick as that of an ox, deep at the chest, arched in the middle of the back, gaunt in all its outlines, and tapering away into an immense tail, like that of an alligator or shark. This immense body was covered by a horny shield, like that of a turtle, and this was curiously pointed and articulated, and covered with large scales and flakes, mostly of an oval form, while it terminated along the back in a spine-like series of pointed and jagged elevations, very much like those of the dorsal fin of a shark, and equally like the irregularities on the back of an alligator, except that they were sharper, slenderer, and higher, and formed a ridge of jagged notches throughout the whole length of the spinal form.

The legs and arms of this monster were almost innumerable, and were attached to the body exactly like the legs and claws of a lobster, which they closely resembled, but with this exception, that they were longer than the arms of a man, and doubled under the sides of the monster in such a way as to leave its body trailing near the ground.

Like the body itself, these legs and claws were all protected by a horny covering, like a lobster, and each of the claws, particularly the two foremost, terminated in two large nippers which appeared large enough to encircle the body of a man, and strong enough to cut him in two at a single blow.

But it was in the head of this terrible monster that ugliness seemed to have found its most perfect expression.

This head had some of the leading features of a turtle's or wolf's, but was still distinct from either. It had ear-openings rather than ears; a short thick neck, which seemed half human and half animal, and

yet could not have been classed in either category; a cavernous mouth, which displayed a terrible array of teeth; in the place of a nose a bony protuberance, which was covered with black bristling hair, as were also the neck and jaws, and immense eyes, which protruded from its head, white and staring, and gave the finishing touch of hideousness to the spectacle the dreadful visitant presented.

Once fairly in the cavern, in the full glare of the fire-light, where Amy could see it distinctly, the monster tossed its claws towards her menacingly, uttered an unearthly cry, and suddenly came to a halt, gathering its legs under its body, and looking at her fiercely, with its great eyes, in a manner that said, as plainly as its manner could say:

"Now, why don't you faint? Let me see you drop insensible, and the rest will be easy."

Indeed for a moment it seemed as if the expectation of the monster would be fulfilled.

Horried, confounded, at a loss what to think or do, the captive sank down upon one knee, with outstretched hands, while she gasped:

"Horrible monster! Oh, it is dreadful to die thus!"

She did not faint, however, nor lose her self-possession, nor the use of her reason. The danger was too great, the visitant too horrible, her alarm too deep, for such a nature as hers to take refuge in any form of weakness. Instead of fainting, or giving way to terrified despair, she caught up a huge brand from the hearth, remembering that most animals are afraid of fire, and put herself into an attitude of defence.

This clearly astonished the intruder. Its tail whipped about dreadfully, its claws clove the air furiously, and its countless legs rattled uneasily on the stony floor.

The maiden stood firm, however, keeping her brand before her and her eyes upon the monster. After a brief interval thus spent she came to the conclusion that the monster was evidently waiting for her to do something, and she accordingly darted forward with a light bound and thrust her flaming brand into its open mouth.

The cry of pain that followed, as the monster beat a hasty retreat, seemed almost human in its expression.

Rejoicing in this first success, Amy seized another and better brand for her purpose—a piece of plank, which had once formed a portion of the deck of a vessel.

It was long enough for her to reach the monster without coming within reach of its claws, and the end which had been in the fire was in a most

furious state of combustion. In an instant, therefore, bethinking herself that an imposing front is half the battle, the resolute girl made another plunge at the open-mouthed intruder, and again thrust the flaming brand into its throat.

This result was even more favourable than before.

The monster not only retreated with cries of pain, but even retreated into the gallery, and hurriedly slid down the declivity to the water with a tremulous splash, as if to cool the burns the heroic maiden had inflicted.

The thrill of joy and relief experienced by Amy at this result can be imagined.

"Perhaps I can keep him from returning," she exclaimed, with a flush of joyous excitement overspreading her features. "The gallery is narrow, the ascent is steep, and fire is evidently something it is not used to."

While speaking she placed herself, brand in hand, at the spot where the gallery was joined to the cavern, and there, with her eyes fixed upon the abyss below, where she still heard the monster splashing and writhing, she stood upon the defensive, ready to renew the struggle.

At this critical moment, however, she caught a glimpse over her shoulder of a moving torch behind her, in a narrow passage-way, and instantly she turned her eyes and thoughts in that direction.

A man was carrying the torch and advancing along the passage towards her, but in such a stooping posture that she could not see his face, or even the outlines of his form, for the simple reason that he held the torch above him.

It was enough, however, for her to know, at that terrible moment, that he might prove a protector.

Turning away from the gallery, therefore, and forgetting the presence of the monster she had been watching, she bounded across the floor with a glad cry, exclaiming:

"Saved—saved!"

At the same moment the man emerged from the narrow passage into the cavern, drew himself up, and responded, with a startled glance, to the inquiring look the maiden had bestowed upon him.

Then followed two wildly joyous exclamations:

"Amy!"

"Arthur!"

And as quick as a flash the maiden was clasped in the arms of the new comer.

The reader is not only aware that he was the young baronet, Sir Arthur Aldene, but is also informed of the events which had brought him, at such a critical juncture, to the secret cavern.

CHAPTER XI.

THE joy of Amy and Sir Arthur at finding themselves thus restored to each other was equalled only by their astonishment. For a full minute, clasped in each other's arms, and thrilling with a gladness too great for utterance, they remained motionless and silent.

During this time, however, Amy did not forget to cast a hurried glance or two towards the retreat of her late visitant, nor did Sir Arthur omit to look occasionally towards the outer cavern, to assure himself that the pretended Captain Coverly was not there.

"I thought you were lost," at length murmured young Amy as she gently disengaged herself from the baronet.

"And I thought you safe at St. George's," responded Sir Arthur. "It seems that we were mutually mistaken."

"Oh, I have had such a fright—such a terrible visitant!" continued Amy, starting and clinging to the arm of her companion, as she heard a scratching on the rocks at the foot of the gallery.

"You have?" demanded the baronet, with a smile. "You are like me, then, for I have had a visitor—only mine was anything but terrible."

He referred, of course, to the visit he had received from Gannal while making his way into the secret cavern.

"Oh!" exclaimed the maiden, "mine was frightful—a strange monster of the deep—a sort of sea-spider."

"Indeed?" rejoined Sir Arthur. "Mine was a sort of land-spider, as near as I could discover. But when was your visitor here?"

"Just now—only a moment before your arrival."

"In point of time, then, we don't agree, for my visitor came about half an hour since. But tell me—"

"Hark! there it is now," interrupted Amy as a sudden splash in the water resounded throughout the cavern. "The spider!"

Before she ceased speaking the young baronet had caught a brand from the fire—the very one Amy had last used—and leaped into the gallery leading to the scene of disturbance.

"Bring another brand, if you please," said he, "and we will have a look at his worship."

Amy called to him warning him of the danger of the descent, and begging him not to expose himself; but his whole soul was absorbed in the pursuit of the intruder, and he did not heed her. Sure as a tiger in his footing, he rushed down the steep declivity, while the splashing continued—redoubled—became terrific—and thus showed that the monster was endeavouring to effect his escape.

"Good! Here it is!" cried Sir Arthur, excitedly. "We'll have it!"

As he spoke he reached the edge of the water, and then his brand, which his shaking had caused to flame furiously, enabled him to see the frightful visitant, which, half out of water, had turned towards him at the sound of his voice and come to a halt, looking back, with a manner full of desperate ferocity, as if it were tempted to rush back to a deadly assault upon him.

The sight was so horrifying, so unearthly, so unlike anything he had ever before seen, that the baronet was momentarily startled, and in that instant, by a natural impulse, he hurled the brand with all his might at the monster's head, exclaiming:

"Quick, Amy! Another torch!"

Brave and prompt, the maiden lost not a moment in snatching a brand from the fire, and Sir Arthur had scarcely uttered his call to her when she stood beside him.

"I hit it! There it is!" he added as he took the brand from her hand and waved it over the water. "It is going!"

Indeed, although the brand had glanced from its horny side, and fallen, hissing, into the water, Sir Arthur's prompt attack had evidently caused the monster to resume its flight, and it was now struggling heavily through the water, with the evident design of meeting some opening communicating with the ocean. An instant only it was seen, and then, even as Sir Arthur drew a pistol to fire upon it, it plunged, with one of its fearful cries, and disappeared beneath the surface, at the base of a wall of rock, which seemed to cut off all farther progress in that direction.

"It's gone, sure enough," added the baronet, "or it may be that it remains there, at the bottom of a deep hole, like an eel, or a turtle. In any case we will leave it to itself for the present. Permit me, dear Amy!"

He took her by the hand, holding the torch before her to enable her to choose her steps, and assisted her up the declivity to the cavern.

It was the first time he had ever addressed her in

that familiar manner, and with tones so full of tenderness, and the rosy hues of a joyful surprise appeared on her cheeks.

"Now that your visitor has vanished," he resumed, "and that mine does not show himself, I shall have time to tell you my good news. Your father has reached the islands safely, and gone on to St. George's."

"Oh, thank heaven!"

In that brief ejaculation was expressed a world of joy, relief, and affection.

"In fact," proceeded he, "we are all safe, with the exception of the four poor fellows who were lost with the boat first launched, at the instant you were torn away from us. Half a dozen or more have come safely to land with your father, and the rest, including the captain and his mates, have arrived safely with me."

"I can breathe again now," murmured Amy, with a heart full of gratitude for these good tidings. "The disaster is so much less than I feared. With father and you restored to me—"

Her eyes and features became eloquent.

Sir Arthur again took her hand.

"How pleasant it is to see each other again," he murmured. "How gladdening to learn, by this reunion, that our lives are united."

She drew nearer to him, as the steel draws nearer to the magnet, by a quick and direct movement. Turning so as to face her, Sir Arthur took her other hand and said:

"Our Father in heaven has been with us in these perils, dear Amy. His great arm is around us. Let us be grateful for our happiness. Let us pray."

The hardy man, the lion-hearted, had never before revealed to Amy the depth of his glorious nature, the fervour of his feelings, or the nobleness of his character, but how closely and fully she entered now into communion with him.

Kneeling together on the rocky floor, face to face, and clasping each other's hands, they prayed and offered up thanksgiving in unison, Sir Arthur speaking and Amy repeating his words fervently. They arose with renewed peace and gladness.

"Our next duty," then said Sir Arthur, "is to hasten to the presence of your father. Permit me to guide and protect you."

With a last searching survey of the cave, to retain all its features and the objects therein upon his memory, the baronet led Amy through the narrow passage leading to the outer cavern.

"The very place," murmured the maiden when her companion had lifted her through the secret trap-door. "The place where I found myself with that fisherman—that Mr. Cuttle—when I came to my senses. I fainted soon after, as we were getting ready to leave for St. George's, and it seems that he conveyed me to this secret cavern."

Sir Arthur shuddered.

He comprehended perfectly that Cuttle, the pretended fisherman, was identical with the pretended Captain Coverly.

"You observe this secret entrance?" said he. "I suppose that we are the only persons in the world, with the exception of that Mr. Cuttle, who are aware of its existence. By the way, I think I will replace everything as I found it. This will not require much time, and I do not want any chance comers to discover the inner cavern at present."

He replaced the slab of stone over the opening, while speaking, and hastened to cover it with the loose earth and pebbles, which he trampled down, and finally sprinkled it with leaves and bits of brush, thus obliterating all outward traces of the recent passage.

"That will do," said he. "We shall come again soon—probably to-morrow. In the meantime our secret is safe."

Arm in arm they passed out of the cavern and gained the beach, in the full light of the moon and the starry heavens. Sir Arthur continued watchful, remembering their late dangers, but Amy, confiding in his protection, resigned herself to the joy of her freedom. The waves roaring and sparkling, the breeze fanning her brow and waving her hair, the moonlight beaming upon her, all filled her soul with a joyous animation.

"How completely everything is changed within a few hours," she exclaimed, with delight. "While on the raft, and even after I saw the land, I regretted that I lived, for I thought that all the rest had perished. It is clear, however, that that was merely a darkness preceding the storm."

"True, dear Amy; all is now changed. Here is a boat which will bear us across the bay to St. George's," and he pointed to the boat in which Gannal had brought her to the cavern. "The night is singularly beautiful, and the voyage will not be long. Let us embark."

He placed her in the stern of the boat, wrapped her carefully about her, pressed her hand to his

lips, pushed off the boat, seated himself in it, took the oars, and rowed to the northward, keeping a dozen rods from the shore.

The sea still ran high, but the wind continued from the south-east, and in a few minutes, as soon as the boat had rounded the Head, for the northern extremity of the island, the little craft found herself nearly before the wind and riding across the billows, in such a way that her progress was easy and safe.

"The distance is scarcely two miles," said Sir Arthur, breaking their joyous silence, "and the wind will be a considerable help to us. In less than an hour, let us hope, you will be with your father."

Amy murmured her joy. It seemed to her at that moment that her happiness was complete. The rays of the moon fell full upon the many features of the young baronet, enabling her to read thereon the love and admiration he had for her, and to note how tender and devoted was his regard, his manner.

"Are you warm enough—quite comfortable?" he demanded, after a pause.

"Quite, thank you."

Sir Arthur continued to row vigorously, and another brief interval succeeded.

"What a monster that was!" suddenly ejaculated Sir Arthur. "What a head, and what claws! Its immense bulk is equalled only by its ugliness. It makes me think of those terrible monsters that occupied the earth before man came upon it. Did you see it fully? Did it come up into the cavern?"

"It came as near to me as you are at this moment!"

"How terrible! And what did you do?"

"I took a brand from the fire, and thrust it down its throat!"

"You did?" and the baronet's voice was full of admiration. "What a brave little girl you are! What did the monster do then?"

"It uttered a terrible cry, and retreated hastily to the water."

"You! so young and so delicate!" exclaimed the baronet, delighted and astonished. "To think of your putting to flight the terrible Wolf of the Bermudas!"

"The wolf!" echoed Amy.

"Certainly—the wolf, the demon, the secret destroyer—whatever we choose to call it. Didn't you hear the sailors talking about it on the Sea-Bird?"

"I did, repeatedly," answered Amy, "but I thought it was a sailor's story, and did not pay much attention to it—these sailors tell so many stories, you know, of sharks, pirates, buried treasure, and all sorts of wonders."

"Well, in this case," declared Sir Arthur, "there is something in all their talk, as you and I can bear witness. There was a sailor on the Sea-Bird, fresh from the islands, and he could talk of nothing but this fearful scourge, which for several months has been the terror of the Bermudians. It seems that several persons have been seized and dragged off into the sea, and not a trace of their doom has been left behind them. These seizures, I believe, are all made in the night time. A number of persons have seen the monster, but without being able to describe it fully, except that it was of immense size, and that its motions caused a strange scratching as of numerous legs and claws upon the sands."

"Exactly as we have seen," murmured Amy.

"Exactly. Such were the accounts given by the sailor referred to, and we all laughed at him, your father and I with the rest. It is clear, however, that there is a terrible animal or reptile here, and we have both seen it."

The maiden shuddered.

"Oh, if I had known all this fearful history of the monster," she exclaimed, "I should not have dared to attack it! I should have dropped down dead, or insensible."

The baronet mused a moment in silence, and then resumed:

"Where did you first see that pretended fisherman? In the outer cabin?"

"Yes. He found me insensible on the raft, and took me there, as he himself told me. There were boxes and barrels in the cove, a quantity of articles, including provisions, and he said that he and several other fishermen stopped there temporarily when the weather was stormy. There was a chest of clothes there, lately washed ashore from a wreck, and he told me to help myself, which I did, while he went to look for the ship's boats. On his return he said he would take me direct to St. George's as soon as we had taken lunch—"

"Ah! he drugged you."

"Be that as it may," she said, "I had no sooner taken a little wine and a bit of biscuit than I became dizzy—unconscious. The next thing I knew was that I found myself in the secret cave alone, and awoke by rolling from the couch, where that man had evidently placed me, to the floor. This awakening could not have occurred more than fifteen minutes before your arrival."

"I see," said Sir Arthur. "It is clear that

our pretended fisherman, Mr. Cuttle, is an outlaw, a ship plunderer, nobody knows what, who has taken up his quarters in the secret cave. He saw you approaching on the raft, and took you to the outer cavern. Once there, he gave you a drag in your wine evidently, and then took you to his den, his real habitation, that inner cave, the secret of which has in some way been made known to him. All this is clear enough, and I can comprehend it. But what puzzles me, and seems so strange to me, is the fact of our finding Mr. Cuttle and that terrible monster such near neighbours."

"Rest assured," rejoined Amy. "They are in one and the same cave."

"It must be that the monster was there accidentally, and for the first time," pursued Sir Arthur. "It cannot be that Mr. Cuttle has ever seen it there, or he would have vacated, bag and baggage. There must be a passage from that inner cavern to the sea, and the monster must have availed himself of it. It is now low water, and I daresay that the passage is open at this hour, or is not more than a foot or two under the surface. That wall of rock where the monster plunged may have an opening below the surface, through which it returned at once to the ocean."

"It is a strange and appalling mystery," rejoined Amy. "When you have told father and Sir Charles of our discoveries what a search will begin!"

"You are right," declared the baronet. "We have this night too nearly missed losing you to be idle hereafter. With the return of the sunlight I shall return to the cavern—or sooner."

The boat had now reached the southern extremity of St. David's Island, and Sir Arthur headed it to the westward.

"You seem to know the way," said Amy. "Have you ever been at the islands before?"

"Never. But I have charts of these shores and waters, and have studied them. This knowledge has already led to your release from the cavern—as I shall soon explain to you—and it will continue to serve us. Do not have any fears of my inexperience. I know many of the landmarks around better than they are known to the men who have passed their lives within sight of them."

The boat had now reached a position from which a pleasing scene was presented to the voyagers—the harbour of St. George's, the western side of St. David's, the outlines of Paget Island, the light of St. George's in the distance ahead, and numerous other lights in the form of a vast semicircle, on the numerous, shores and islands around them, with here and there, in different directions, a staunch Bermudian boat, with its lantern at mast-head, returning from the fishing-grounds or from an excursion for pleasure.

"How beautiful it all is!" said Amy. "Our perils are over. My heart is full of gladness."

"I am pleased to see you so completely yourself again," rejoined Sir Arthur. "Patience for one brief half-hour, and you shall be with your father. Notice how rapidly we are moving."

"But are you not tired?"

"Tired? Not a bit of it. You know that all of our young gentlemen are used to the oars, owing to our frequent races, and I had my share in the business when I was at college. I say this, not to boast, dear Amy, but to reassure you—to give you confidence in me, for, to be frank with you, a boat has pushed off from the end of St. David's Island, and is now in pursuit of us."

"A boat?" echoed Amy, startled, as she turned abruptly and looked behind her.

"As you see," pursued the baronet. "But have no fear. It is probably Mr. Cuttle, the pretended fisherman."

As he had stated, a small rowing-boat, with a single man in it, had pushed off from the island, and was coming in their wake with a speed and in a manner which showed that he had some sinister purpose.

Indeed, a moment later, as Sir Arthur bent himself at the oars, a hoarse laugh of mockery and triumph came over the water to the pursued from the pursuer.

They both recognized the voice—Amy as that of the Mr. Cuttle who had taken her from the raft, and Sir Arthur as that of the pretended Captain Coverly who had been so anxious to assist him.

He was indeed Gummel.

He was seated in an open boat, long and narrow, and of singular strength and beauty, and wielding a pair of stout and broad-bladed oars vigorously; he was coming in the wake of Amy and Sir Arthur with the speed of the wind.

CHAPTER XII

Clearly, a chase was begun!

The course of the pursuer, as he swept out from St. David's, very soon brought him into the bright moonlight, as seen from the boat he was pursuing,

and he was thus clearly presented to the gaze of its occupants.

He was full three hundred yards astern of them, but they could see his form, his motions, the flashing of his oars, the gleam of the troubled water behind them.

They could see, against the silvery moonlight, several projections at his waist, on each side, which they knew were the handles of his weapons.

They could see, too, that his features were muffled in a scarf of some description, as if to protect them from the gaze of any fishing or pleasure party he might encounter.

All things considered, his appearance was sufficiently formidable and his actions sufficiently alarming.

Once assured of his identity, of his evident purpose, Amy turned aside with an inquiring glance upon her companion.

He was calm as ever, attentively quiet, and rowing harder than any preceding moment of the voyage.

Seeing that the pursuer was exerting himself greatly, as if determined to make an attack while the boat was outside the harbour, Sir Arthur had applied himself to the task before him with increased vigour. The boat seemed to fly through the water.

Reassured by the calmness of Sir Arthur, Amy resumed her seat, facing him, and resolved not to turn or move again, lest she should lessen the speed of the boat. He observed it, as she saw by his approving smile.

"He seems terrible to me," she said. "Is there any likelihood that he will overtake us?"

"Not the slightest," answered Sir Arthur. "If there were I should land on the island we are passing, raise an alarm, collect a number of the honest fishermen whose cottages you see along the shore, and turn the pursuit into a fight."

The maiden again breathed freely. Her eyes beamed with admiration. How charming it was, at such a moment, to have such a protector.

"As the case stands, then—"

"We will go to St. George's, for several reasons. In the first place we shall be at the end of our journey on arriving there, and your father and friends will be relieved of a great anxiety."

"Yes—oh, yes," murmured the maiden. "The sooner we are there the better."

"And in the second place," added Sir Arthur, "it is possible that by proceeding we may draw our pretended fisherman into a trap—into some position where I can take him prisoner."

On hearing this the maiden recovered her usual spirits.

"If you have advanced as far as that in a counter-project against our pursuer," she observed, "I may as well dismiss all anxiety about him."

"You may, certainly," declared the baronet. "As you see, he is about as far from us as he was at the moment when we first saw him coming."

"But will your strength hold out, to row in this way until we reach St. George's?"

"The chances in my favour, in any case, are fully equal to the chances in his. His boat appears to be smaller and lighter than ours, and this fact might tell in his favour in smooth water, but in such a sea as is now running it cannot aid him greatly. What is wanted here is steadiness and solidity of motion, and I am quite certain that your weight, in that end of the boat, is a decided help to our progress, since it keeps us steady and advancing."

"You feel quite sure, then, that he will not overtake us?"

"Quite; he could not possibly do so."

"Not if one of your oars should break?" asked Amy, quickly.

"No, not even in that case."

"And why not, pray?"

"Because I am armed, as you may be aware, and because, with such moonlight as this, I can put a bullet through him the moment he comes within two or three rods of me."

Amy was pleasantly surprised at this statement. Her eyes and features beamed with the warmth of her admiration.

"I never saw such a gentleman as you are," she declared, without any anxiety in her silvery tones. "The more I see of you the wiser, the stronger, the nobler you appear to me!"

Sir Arthur blushed like a girl, and said:

"That assurance is very pleasant, dear Amy. Whatever good qualities I may possess your approval will surely increase and enlarge them. As is now clearly apparent, we are progressing finely. This shore, which we are already leaving behind us, is Paget Island. The ship channel is on the south side of it; but I have come along its northern shore in order to shorten the distance. The lights of the town must now loom up plainly before us, do they not?"

"Quite so—the few that still remain burning," answered Amy. "There are several bright lights though, and one of these must be at the Mayne

manor-house, where we are going. Joy, joy! we shall soon be there!"

For a moment, as she thought of her father, she forgot the pursuer.

"The rascal is getting desperate," observed Sir Arthur, with a contemptuous smile as he regarded Gummel. "He evidently counted upon running us down in a few minutes. He was not aware, you know, of the prizes I assisted in winning when I was at college. Finding that he has gained scarcely a rod of us, to say nothing of overtaking us, he is now lashing himself into a terrible passion. He rears and plunges at his work like a colt for the first time in harness. His face now, I warrant, would be a curious study. I fancy that I can hear his breathing above the roar of the waves, while I, as you may have noticed, am pulling away as gently as ever."

Amy well understood the value of her companion's quietness. He was rowing, as he had all along been doing, with those long, steady, vigorous strokes to be expected of an amateur who had more than once rowed for a popular prize, and for the honour of his classmates.

"He gains a little now," resumed the baronet, after a brief silence. "His desperation is at its height. He is using his strength—doing all that he can."

"But will he overtake us?"

"No. It would be a sorry night for him if he should," answered Sir Arthur, with a bright flash in his eyes. "Let him once approach within three rods of us, and I will shoot him. I looked to my pistols before leaving the Sea-Bird, and they have not been wet or injured. I should not have taken them from my cabin if the captain, at the last minute previously to our final embarking, had not said something about the presence of wreckers on these islands, who do not scruple to act as pirates."

"It is a good thing that you have them," declared Amy. "They give us a feeling of safety that would otherwise be wanting."

"Look at him now!" exclaimed Sir Arthur, with his easy, careless laugh. "He is furious with rage and disappointment."

This was literally true.

The boat of Amy and Sir Arthur was now passing the little islets which outlie the northern end of St. George's Island, and consequently within less than a mile of its destination, and yet the pursuer had not gained a rod upon it.

Both were now fully in the harbour, of course, and in the midst of a circle of lights that gleamed from Smith's, Paget's, and St. George's, so that Gummel had become alive to the danger he was incurring in thus pursuing his wicked schemes.

How he toiled, struggled, exhausted his strength, can be readily imagined.

The result of his desperate efforts was to bring his boat within a hundred yards or so of the couple he was pursuing—so near that Amy, on looking over her shoulder, and observing its nearness, uttered a slight cry of alarm.

The baronet smiled.

"It is his last effort," said he, as quietly as before. "His wind is broken—the pursuit is now over. I have only to hold the advantage I now possess a minute or two longer. In fact, he stops—yes, he stops rowing."

A couple of harmless pistol shots resounded over the water. Looking back, Amy and Sir Arthur saw that the pursuer had given over the chase, and was tossing aimlessly on the waves, shaking his clenched hand at them, after the futile discharge of his pistol.

Sir Arthur slackened his efforts, and Gummel on observing this broke out into a volley of curses and threatenings.

"Our tiger has become a barking dog," observed the baronet. "We are now beyond his reach, and safe."

At this moment a pleasure party, arrived at one of the wharfs of St. George's, and suddenly struck up a popular song, and Gummel accepted this as a hint to take his departure. With a final curse and threat he turned his boat around and rowed slowly away towards St. David's.

(To be continued.)

AUSTRALIAN WEATHER.—New Year's Day was intensely hot in Australia, the temperature at Melbourne Observatory marking 96 deg. in the shade. But the 12th of January was still hotter. At Melbourne Observatory the record was 108.4 deg. in the shade, and 145 deg. in the sun on the surface of the ground. At Kapunda, South Australia, the thermometer indicated 115 deg. in the shade on the latter of these days. Many bush fires were caused in the more cultivated districts, the grass and crops being unusually luxuriant, and the fruit crop was much injured.

THE PARIS EXHIBITION, 1867.

W^e, this week, are enabled to give our readers an elaborate and detailed view of the ground plan of the great building in the Champ de Mars, in Paris, in which, until the 31st of October next, is to be held the largest, grandest, and most perfect international exhibition the world has ever seen. It is curious to observe, by the way, that, notwithstanding the great odds obtained by the late Prince Consort for having inaugurated what may be termed the "International Exhibition Movement," by his suggestion of those of 1851 and 1862, it is to our French neighbours the notion is, in fact, due.

France has had artistic exhibitions since the time of Louis XIV.; industrial exhibitions since the time of the Great Revolution. The first industrial exhibition for the whole of France was held in 1798, when only 110 persons sent contributions. This, however, was one of the most agitated periods in French history. The second exhibition of the same kind took place at the ancient Palace of the Louvre, in 1801, and was opened by Napoleon Bonaparte, then "First Consul." The number of contributors on that occasion amounted to 220. The next was held in 1819, the number of contributors being 1,500.

To give a notion of the advance of the French in the industrial arts we may point to the fact that in 1834 it was found necessary to change, because of want of space, their locality from the Louvre to the Place de la Concorde, which, a few years afterwards, was abandoned for the Champs Elysées. Still growing, the present Exhibition has to be held in the magnificent Champ de Mars, wherein it is calculated that something like 30,000 exhibitors will be found. As may be seen from the above ground plan, the design of the building is admirable for purposes of inspection; and nothing can be better than classifying the products—first, by their nature; secondly, by the country to which they belong. The building, seen from a distance, has a circular appearance, though it is in part an oblong, with the corners rounded off. Seven galleries run round the building, one within the other, and each of these is devoted to the reception of a separate group of products. The innermost gallery contains fixtures, engravings, photographs, and other works of art; while, in the outermost, aliments eatable and drinkable are alone to be found. Of the intermediate galleries one will be given up to the materials of art, another to furniture and objects kept in rooms. The scheme comprises also an agricultural exhibition, with live animals, and a horticultural exhibition with live plants. Among other novel features there are a model church, a model farmhouse, a model cottage, and, from Russia, some peasants.

The honours are pretty nearly divided between England and France. At all events, Great Britain (the Prince of Wales is at the head of the English Commission) has maintained her character for energy and hard work, and there is no question about the fact that she was more forward than nearly all her neighbours in sending her contributions.

England in this exhibition has indeed most ably vindicated her energies and manufactures in machinery and art. *A propos* of the latter, the English stained glass, as well as that of France, is appearing in the clerestory windows of the vestibule, and it is pleasant to report that the first work of the kind uncovered by our countrymen is both brilliant and harmonious in colouring and effective in treatment, and there is no doubt that Europe is finding its way back to the Monkish art of the thirteenth century in this particular mode of decoration, which was so completely lost half a century ago. The stained glass which our fathers found worthy of cathedrals when this present century was in its prime would certainly scarcely be admitted now in the poorest provincial chapel. And the remark applies to French art as well as to English; the modern painted royalties of the noble churches of Paris sadly want a serious accident to happen to them that beautiful Gothic churches may no longer be ruined by splashes of colours over acres of glass. If they would fade like certain pictures now what a relief it would be!

The British Commission has introduced a novel kind of decoration in the case of the great windows of the Machinery Court, which are eighty in number. No blinds were provided for them, and it was felt that shutting out the light without taking advantage of the transparency would be flinging away an opportunity. At first it was proposed to give up these windows to applicants for whose machinery room

could not be found in the building; but here an advertisement concession came in the way, and no terms could be made with concessionaires or others, who asked 50*l.* per window for the right of putting up the proposed blinds, or the modest sum of 4,000*l.* for the eighty windows. The proposal then had to be reconsidered, and the result is remarkable—the eighty windows will present a long record of the achievements of English heroes in mechanical invention, each window presenting a picture of a machine with a bold inscription giving the name of the inventor and the date of the invention: three of these blinds are in place, exhibiting the earliest specimens of the locomotive. This was certainly a happy thought, and will fittingly finish off the clerestory windows of the Machinery and Processes Department of Great Britain. The eighty blinds will doubtless give rise to a good many arguments, and it is to be hoped that the effect will be to restore a few of the titles of British inventors, which have often been attacked very recklessly, and sometimes defended in a very lukewarm manner.

Of the labour of erecting the building we may say it has been very great and the expense enormous. The grade of that portion of the Champ de Mars which adjoins the river Seine had to be raised to the level of the Quai d'Orsay, and this alone was a work involving much labour, expense, and time. The grounds have been otherwise improved, so as to completely change their appearance from the former open field to a beautiful park, in the centre of which stands the present great Industrial Palace. From the ground plan of the building it will be seen that the entire space of the famous Champ de Mars, an immense field 1,000 yards long by 700 feet wide, formerly devoted to horse-racing and military reviews, and until the present buildings were begun it was the site of the Parisian Hippodrome. It was in the Champ de Mars that, in 1790, Louis XVI., seated on a splendid altar, swore to maintain the new Constitution, which finally overthrew him. It was here that, in 1850, Louis Philippe distributed the colours to the National Guard; and that, later (May 10, 1852), the present Napoleon III. gave the eagles to the army, on which occasion there were over 60,000 troops present on parade.

The following are the chief dimensions of the building and its approaches: From the Bridge of Jena to the commencement of the covered promenade is 315 feet. The length of the covered promenade on the side of the exhibition facing the Seine is 820 feet. From the chief entrance of the palace to the edge of the central garden is 536 feet. The length of the central garden is likewise 536 feet. The distance between the central garden and the entrance on the side facing the Ecole Militaire is also 536 feet. The length of the covered promenade leading to the Ecole Militaire is 712 feet. The extreme length of the building is 1,608 feet, and its extreme breadth is 500 feet. The space of ground covered by the building and its accessories, including the surrounding park and covered promenades, is 3,158 feet in length by about 1,500 feet wide.

The architect of the palace was Mr. Hardy, a Frenchman, both by birth and education. The chief engineer was Mr. Krantz, formerly chief engineer of the Orleans Railway, who was appointed by the French Government, without any kind of competition taking place. There was no general contractor for the entire work, but separate contractors for each particular department. The masonry alone is known to have cost 500,000 *dols.*; but we have no means, at present, of calculating the total cost of the building.

DIVINATION OF RIB-GRASS.—It was once, and perhaps still is, a custom in Berwickshire to practise divination by means of "kemps" (*Plantago lanceolata*). Two spikes were taken in full bloom, and being bereft of every appearance of blow, they were wrapt in a dock leaf, and put below a stone. One of them represented the lad, the other the lass. They were examined next morning, and if both spikes appeared in blossom, then there was to be "aye love between them twae;" if none, "the course of true love" was not "to run smooth."—*Johnston's "Eastern Borders."*

WORK IN THE PARIS EXHIBITION.—The earthworks of the Paris Exhibition, including all the cutting and filling in the park, have amounted to upwards of half a million cubic yards. The ironwork of the building amounts to 13,200 tons, of which nearly 10,000 tons are in the great machinery gallery. The prices of the wrought-iron work have been, for the great gallery, 23*l.* per ton, with the exception of the sash-iron, which were 31*l.* The corrugated plates were 28*l.* 10*s.* per ton, fitted. For the inner galleries the price of the cast-

iron work, in columns, arches, consoles, &c., was 13*l.* 5*s.* per ton. The Coignet *béton* has cost 1*l.* 12*s.* per cubic metre, or about 2*s.* per cubic yard. The windows of the machinery gallery present a surface of no less than 53,700 square yards, and the other galleries have nearly 25,000 square yards of glass.

WORDS.—Professor Max Müller quotes the statement of a clergyman that some of the labourers in his parish had not 300 words in their vocabulary. A well-educated person seldom uses more than about 3,000 or 4,000 words in actual conversation. Accurate thinkers and close reasoners, who select with great nicety the words that exactly fit their meaning, employ a much larger stock, and eloquent speakers may rise to a command of 10,000. Shakespeare, who displayed a greater variety of expression than probably any other writer in any language, produced all his plays with about 15,000 words. Milton's works are built up with 8,000, and the Old Testament says all that it has to say with 5,642 different words.

A LARGE TROUT IN SUPFOLK.—A very fine specimen of the common trout was taken by some men on February 14th in the river Blyth, near Halesworth, in the part called the Old River. The water having been let out of the navigable reaches between Halesworth and the Old Chapel Locks for the purpose of clearing out a shoal, also lowered the water in the Old River, so that the fish was more easily seen and captured. It measured three feet four inches from the tip of its snout to the end of its tail, girthed twenty-one inches, and weighed exactly fifteen pounds. The extreme end of the lower jaw turned up more than an inch, with a blunt point at right angles to the jaw, and fitted into a corresponding recess in the upper jaw. The colour was pale straw, but the spots upon it were neither very large nor very bright.

WHO IS OLD?—A wise man will never rust out. As long as he can move and breathe he will be doing something for himself, his neighbour, or his posterity. It is a foolish idea to suppose that we must lie down and die because we are old. Who is old? Not the man of energy, not the day labourer in science, art, or benevolence; but he only who suffers his energies to waste away and the spring of life to become motionless, on whose head the hours drag heavily, and to whom all things wear the garb of gloom. Is he old? should not be put, but, is he active? can he breathe freely and move with agility? There are scores of gray-headed men we should prefer, in any important enterprise, to those young gentlemen who fear and tremble at approaching shadows, and turn pale at a lion in their path, at a harsh word or frown.

VIRGINIA.

CHAPTER VII.

H^{OUR} after hour Mrs. Lander lay upon her bed praying for a moment's sleep, which would not come. Her first passion of tears had, as Eunice predicted, set her mind free, and it came out of her great burst of grief hard and sharp as steel. Shall I tell you how this woman reasoned there in her solitude? Do not think it unnatural, for such things may exist in human nature—up from her worldly heart came consolation in this form, even when she was weeping for her lost daughter:

"Had she lived I must have been dependant still—worse off than ever, for even as a child she was haughty and selfish—and he was generous as the sun. But—she was my daughter, my only child—my hope, my beautiful, beautiful darling."

Here came a great flood of anguish, which proved the natural motherhood of the woman, but directly her keen selfishness broke through.

"Mistress of all this—unrestricted and young enough to think of a future—no, no, I could not give it up. What do these half-cousins, to whom the law awards it, know of wealth and its uses? Besides, he wished it. The will is every word in his own handwriting; never were a man's desires made more positive. Then, I shall do so much good with the money. Let it pass from me, and the poor would be great sufferers. But, above all, he wished it. He gave it to me."

Thus the woman reasoned in her tears and wept in her reasoning. She would doubtless have given up the property could that sacrifice have brought her child to life. But with the certainty of her death the possession of wealth was a consolation the sweetness of which she began to taste keenly even at this early moment.

Towards night Eunice came into the chamber with a cup of strong tea and some toast, of which Mrs. Lander partook. After this she became restless, and walked her room to and fro, watching the crescent of a new moon which just smiled on the lovely

landscape and died out pleasantly, like the dimples on an infant's face.

At last the door opened and Eunice threw a black shawl into the room.

"They are all lived up for the night. Come along."

There was no sound upon the stairs—scarcely the rustle of a dress—to tell when those women went out or came in. Two waving shadows flitted across the grounds, followed by the sound of a deeply drawn breath as the stable-door opened and closed with noiseless caution. Then a rough head appeared at the window a moment, and the light seemed to go out. Some thick, dark substance had been drawn over the glass.

All this precaution seemed useless. No one was watching. The grounds lay shadowy and quiet in the calm night. The slow sweep of the river rose above the sounds of wakeful insects that chirped their tiny music in the leaves. All at once the roar and rumble of an engine thundering along startled the two women, who were creeping through the shrubbery. The sound frightened them, neither could have told why, and they ran forward breathlessly. The front door being farthest from the household, stood open, but there was a long stretch of the marble pavement which they were compelled to pass in reaching it. Before leaving the shrubbery they paused to listen to the sound of feet coming up a flight of steps out along the face of a stone precipice which lifted the lawn above the river. Two men were evidently coming up from the railroad, which wound along the feet of this precipice, and a few moments would bring them in sight of the houses.

"It is David and that man," whispered Mrs. Lander. "They will find the door open. What shall we do?"

"Run for dear life," answered Eunice, and gathering up her skirts, she made a vigorous rush for the portico.

Mrs. Lander followed closely, keeping inside of the pillars, and scarcely allowing her feet to touch the marble pavement.

"There they come," whispered Eunice, pausing for one instant to reconnoitre. "I can see their heads—now for it!"

The next instant both the women stood in the entrance hall, clinging together and panting for breath. Eunice shook off her mistress, closed the door with noiseless slowness, drew a bolt and turned the key in its lock.

"Now get rid of that and go to your room. It's natural that I should be up," she whispered. "I give you ten minutes to get all right. Hark!"

The two men were outside the portico, walking across the terrace. Eunice took off her blanket shawl, and groping her way to the rack at the lower end of the hall, hung it up with other out-door garments and stood in the dark, waiting.

The sharp ring of a bell sounded through the stillness of the house. Another and another peal. Then Eunice came forward and called out to know who was there.

"It is I—David and Mr. Stone," was the reply.

Eunice struck a match, lighted the hall lamp, and then deliberately opened the door.

"It is fortunate I was up," she said. "Madam has been taking on so I was afraid to go to sleep. Have you any news, sir?"

"Nothing more than the papers give," answered the lawyer. "Poor lady, it must be a dreadful blow for her."

"Awful," answered Eunice. "She hasn't lifted her head from the pillow since morning."

The faint sound of footsteps and the trail of a dress came from above just as Eunice uttered these words. She caught a quick breath and went on:

"Dear me, that must be her! She's heard the door-bell, and imagines that it's you. It's enough to break one's heart to go up and tell her there's nothing to hope for; but it must be done."

"Say that I will see her in the morning," said the lawyer, setting down his hat.

"I'll go to her at once and have the worst over, or she'll be wandering through the house all night. David, you take Mr. Stone to his room."

With this Eunice went upstairs abruptly, leaving the two men to take care of themselves.

There was a heavy rain falling the next morning, and the whole house took a dreary aspect, in spite of the fragrance that came up from the flowers with every light breath of wind, and the cheerful adornments of the breakfast-room, which overlooked one of the loveliest pictures that that domain could produce.

At another time there might have been a pleasant variety in such a stormy day, for the shifting clouds were beautiful, and gleams of sunshine now and then struggled through the trees, bathing them with light for an instant, then throwing them back into the mingled fog and glitter of a fresh burst of rain.

One grand old willow stood out on the lawn just before the bay window, with its great bows dripping down to the grass, and the window itself was curtained with crimson, flowing honeysuckles, threaded about the lower sash with white jessamines, over which ten thousand rain-drops trembled and fell away, dashing the broad window-panes with little rivulets of brightness. The room itself was both elegant and comfortable. Fruit and flower paintings in harmony with the scene without hung from the walls. The table itself was a picture, with its delicate chime, its cut crystal and frosted silver. Yet the lawyer who sat there alone took no heed of these things. His mind was on the ocean with that burning ship for Mr. Lander had been his friend, and he had regarded that bright-haired child, his daughter, with no common affection.

The only object in the room was a portrait of this girl, taken when she was perhaps ten years old. It was larger and less childish than the picture which hung in Mr. Lander's office, but there was no mistaking the identity. She sat with her arms folded on a desk, looking wearily at an open book, which contained, no doubt, some hard lesson; other books lay scattered on the desk, which added to her disquiet; tears were brimming into her eyes, and you could almost fancy the lips beginning to quiver.

Stone looked at this picture now and then as he made a pretence of eating his breakfast. The sight of it saddened him to the heart; and more than once he rested his forehead on one hand, sighing heavily as if the child had been his own. He sat in this position when a low female voice disturbed him. Mrs. Lander drew towards the table and sat down, not as if she intended to partake of the breakfast, but with the dreary air of one who forces herself to perform a painful duty.

Mr. Stone lifted his massive forehead from the hand which supported it and turned his eyes kindly upon her. She was very pale, and her face presented the look of a woman who had cried all night.

"You were looking at her picture," she said. "It is like her, poor child. You will find one in every room that her father occupied much; he doted on her."

"She was a fine child," said the lawyer, gently. "They tell me that you also have lost a daughter."

"My only child," answered the mother.

"And who are the nearest relatives?"

"The children of Mr. Lander's cousin, who died long ago."

"Farmers?"

"I believe so."

"This will be a fine property for them to fall into—a very fine property," said the lawyer, gradually gliding into the spirit of his profession.

"Yes," answered the widow, faintly.

"Have you any knowledge of a will, Mrs. Lander?"

"I—I—have heard of one, or that he was about to make one before he went abroad after the girls, but he might not have done it. There seemed to be no occasion. He was not a very old man, and worshipped his daughter, whose health was perfect. I thought of this yesterday, and went into his study to look for something of the kind, but my heart gave way; I could not force myself to touch his papers, and sent for you. But it is doubtful—very doubtful if anything can be found."

"We will search. You eat nothing, madam."

"I cannot taste a morsel."

"And I have got over what little appetite this news has left to me; so we will go to my poor friend's room at once."

"No, no, I would rather not. The very sight of his chair and desk made me faint when I went in yesterday. Here are the keys; this, which belongs to the safe, has some mysterious combination which no one but David comprehends. But he will go with you—a more trusty creature never lived."

"I can believe that," said the lawyer. "He seems a smart, honest fellow enough. Let him show me the room."

Mr. Stone had arisen by this time and rung the bell. The sadness which hung around when alone had vanished entirely. He took out his watch like a man impatient to proceed to business. Mrs. Lander kept her seat by the table and said nothing. She did not seem to know when David came in, and the lawyer followed him from the room. Eunice entered the breakfast-room soon after, and began to replace some silver on the sideboard, casting sharp glances at her mistress as she passed to and fro, but there was no talking between them. Eunice trod softly, and her mistress seemed to listen with a strain of the senses.

At last a slow, heavy tread came down the stairs, and Mr. Stone entered the breakfast-room.

"Madam," he said, with a distinctness that made the widow start in her chair, "had Mr. Lander, among the people about him, any such persons as Eunice and Joshua Hurd?"

"One of those names belongs to me," said Eunice. "To you, eh? Well, where is the other witness?"

"The other what?"

"This Joshua Hurd?"

"Where should he be but somewhere about the stables? Show me where a horse is and I'll show you Josh Hurd. Why, the man's my own brother. But what do you want with him, if I may be so bold?"

"Did he and you sign a paper for Mr. Lander just before he went away?"

"It must have been nigh on a week or ten days afore."

"But you did sign one?"

"I happened to be going by his office door and he called me in."

"Well?"

"He was a writing fast and kept me till he got through. Then he signed his name to the paper and told me to write mine too."

"And you did?"

"I did; then he told me to call John Nolan or some one of the servants, but John was out and I ran across to the stables for Joshua."

"Did you know what this paper was?"

"Yes; Mr. Lander told me—it's his will."

The lawyer was not quite satisfied, clear and simple as all this appeared. One of those inexplicable feelings that are beyond all reason had seized him, and unconsciously he fell into a spirit of sharp cross-examination.

"Can you find this man, Joshua Hurd? I would like to speak with him," he said.

"In less than no time. He's always about the stables," answered the woman, and she went off with an air of relief.

Mrs. Lander had not spoken during this examination, but her eyes were fixed anxiously on the lawyer, and he could see that some hard strain was upon her. This was scarcely more than natural, considering her position in the family. Still the lawyer watched her with vague doubts, which he could not himself have accounted for.

"Is it true? Has a will been found?" she asked, after a pause which seemed unnaturally long.

Her voice was low and hoarse, her eyes downcast; she did not lift them fully to his once while she was speaking.

"Yes, a will has been found in Mr. Lander's safe, witnessed by the woman, and a man who is her brother."

"Oh!" exclaimed the widow, and she fell into silence, leaning her elbow on the table and shrouding her face with one hand.

She evinced no curiosity to know how the property had been left. Was it because she had no hopes in her own behalf, or from the reticence of fore-knowledge?

The lawyer asked himself this question as he gazed at her from under his heavy eyebrows. The woman seemed conscious that his gaze was upon her, and moved restlessly in her seat; then her hand dropped, and she lifted her eyes clearly to his.

"To whom does this will relate? Where does the property go?" she asked.

He did not answer her, for that moment Eunice came in, followed by her brother, who seemed restless and uneasy as the lawyer turned upon him. First he buried a huge hand in his pocket, then drew it out with a jerk and took off his cap in hot haste, struck with a sudden remembrance of some early maternal lesson on the subject. He grew red and sallow under the keen eyes bent upon him beneath Lawyer Stone's heavy brows. Indeed, in all respects this man, Joshua Hurd, was a remarkably uncouth ignoramus—possessed of appetites and plenty of that low cunning which is sometimes more than a match for absolute wisdom. To use his own term, endorsed by the more acute sister, Joshua knew as well as another man "on which side his bread was buttered," stupid as he seemed.

"Come here, my good man; I want to have a little talk with you," said the lawyer. "I want a little talk with you about the paper you signed for Mr. Lander. When was it? I forget the exact time."

"It was just afore the Gov'ner went away from home last time," answered Joshua, with the dogged air of a stupid schoolboy.

"But when was that?"

"Last spring."

"Do you remember the date?"

"No."

"Was it morning or evening?"

"Can't remember."

"Who signed the paper first, you or your sister?"

"Eunice."

"Was Mrs. Lander present?"

"No."

"Had Mr. Lander signed it when you came in?"

"Unsure."

"Did Mr. Lander say anything?"
 "Said it was his last testament."
 "Was that exactly what he said?"
 "Jest that."
 "Did you tell anyone of this?"
 "No; 'twasn't none of my business."

The lawyer was puzzled. It certainly was strange that Mr. Lander, with two intelligent and tolerably educated retainers in the house, should have selected this boor for a witness to his will. But there was nothing to be gathered from the curt answers that had followed his investigations. So far, the will seemed legal in all its forms, and Mrs. Lander was, by its provisions, sole legatee of all her brother-in-law's wealth.

Mr. Stone went into the breakfast-room again and found this lady gazing fixedly on the carpet at her feet, so lost in thought that she sprang up and uttered a little scream when the lawyer addressed her.

"Madam, the will we have found is entirely in your favour."

There was no surprise in her face, no outburst of satisfaction. Her eyes were turned wildly on the lawyer, her lips moved, but she did not speak.

"The news overcomes you, madam!"

"Yes, yes—I am a little faint—thank you, I am only a little."

The woman gasped for breath and pressed one hand on her bosom. She did, indeed, seem ready to faint.

Eunice Hurd came into the room, almost carrying her off.

"She's tired out, and talking ain't good for her."

Eunice looked upon Mr. Stone with a defiant air which he could not understand.

The lawyer sat down dissatisfied, and taking out the will read it over again. It was certainly in his friend's handwriting, and he was made joint executor with Mrs. Lander. Why was it that a sense of mystery and wrong-doing clung to him?

CHAPTER VIII

A young man entered an eminent banking-house in the lower part of the city, with the air of a stranger, and presented a bill of exchange so large in amount as to occasion some surprise, for he drew the larger portion at once in gold and carried it off in a leather satchel which he carried in his hand. The strain upon his hand denoted no ordinary amount of the precious metal; though he carried it with assumed ease, the blood rose to his pale face with the exertion. This circumstance, and something in the appearance of the man, drew the general attention upon him as he passed out of the bank. There was scarcely a clerk in the room who did not follow this stranger with his eyes and comment upon his elegance of manner and person. His air and dress were foreign, his beard, black and bright as the plumage of a raven, was trimmed with great neatness, and magnificent black eyes completed the manly beauty of a face which no one could have looked upon without admiration.

"There goes a fellow that ought to be a lord, from the cut of his figure," said one.

"By the pile of gold he carries away," answered another. "Only he looks too modest and walks too quietly for that."

"Some nobleman going to travel incog., no doubt," observed a third. "Stylish fellow, any way."

More than one person who met this man in the street made the same observation. His quiet yet lofty carriage, joined to a style of beauty which was both statuesque and manly, singled him out from the crowd. Both men and women turned to look at him as he passed, wondering who he could be.

The stranger walked on, apparently unconscious of the general notice, but his observation was keen, notwithstanding this seeming indifference, and a smile curled his lips beneath the shadow of his black beard as he entered one of the hotels and proceeded to a suite of rooms taken that morning.

When he entered the hotel the stranger had carried a leather box in his hand, such as statesmen and persons travelling on business sometimes use for convenience when papers are to be transported from place to place. This box stood on a console table in the drawing-room when he entered that room on his return from the banker's. He drew an easy-chair towards the table, sat down in it and unlocked the box, in which were some papers and small packages, which might or might not contain valuables.

He pressed these papers down with his hands, then unlocked the satchel and poured a steady stream of gold into the box till it was even full, and the satchel scarcely lightened of one-third of its contents. Then he dropped a handful or two of the coin into his pockets, locked the satchel, and put it on the top of a wardrobe, which stood in the bed-chamber opening out of the room where he sat. A massive cornice of carved rosewood formed a hollow which

would have concealed a larger package, and in which this sank completely out of sight.

After the exertion of hiding away his gold the man sat down, brushed some particles of dust from his coat and took a package of letters from his breast pocket. These he examined with great care and seemed to be taxing his memory severely regarding the writers, for he muttered more than once, "Well, I never saw this man," or, "I wonder how the fellow looks."

The letters were directed to some of the first statesmen and merchants in the country. One, which bore the name of Lander, he singled out and examined carefully.

"They never met, I feel quite sure they never met," he muttered, smoothing his jetty beard with one hand as he read.

"I wonder how near the old man lives. But I forget, the luggage will soon be here, and I have made no preparation."

Seymour, for by that name he went, arose suddenly, took his hat, and went out. He was a little bewildered now, and seemed to be looking for some place which he was reluctant to ask for in words. A moment he paused before the windows of an upholsterer's, where he lounged away half an hour examining specimens of antique furniture with the air of a connoisseur.

A dressing-case, richly appointed, and a desk of ebony, mounted heavily with silver, seemed to strike his fancy. These he put aside for purchase, inquiring first if the cases that belonged to them could be found, and if the mountings could be brightened and the whole put in order at once.

The man paid for these articles in gold. He ordered both desk and dressing-case to be delivered at the hotel. The stranger left his name in full, Horace Seymour, and gave the number of his rooms.

The next remarkable step that this man took was to wander on and on till he came to a pawnbroker's shop, with a host of miscellaneous articles hanging at the window. He went in and inquired for second-hand watches, something unique. If one could be found with the letters H. S., or even S. singly upon the case, he would not mind the price; a crest, too, might enhance the value of the article.

The pawnbroker's sharp eyes brightened at this. Some Smith called Henry, Horatio, Horace, or Hector, perhaps, had left his unfortunate initials, tied up unredeemed, on the back of a fine hunting-watch, worn just enough to become highly respectable. This Horace Seymour purchased without demurring at the exorbitant price which the pawnbroker instantaneously put upon it.

When the watch was transferred to his pocket he desired to examine any other curious things in the way of jewellery that might remain on sale. Directly a case of trinkets was brought forth, out of which Seymour selected a seal ring whose value even the pawnbroker did not know, for it was an antique head, exquisitely cut, and almost worth its weight in diamonds.

Seymour's eyes brightened slowly as he saw this gem, but he examined half a dozen uninteresting articles before he touched it. Then he carelessly asked the price, paid it without comment, and slipped the ring on his finger.

"Had he anything else worth looking at?"

"Oh, yes, certainly," the pawnbroker said, in a flutter of cringing delight; "one thing which had been considered very beautiful, only it was in a form which took from the value—the miniature of a lady. A lover of art like the gentleman would be sure to appreciate it, though it was probably a family portrait. Would the gentleman care to look at it?"

"Yes, if it was something very extra, a work of pure art, the gentleman did not mind."

The next minute Seymour held a small oval miniature in his hand. The setting was heavy and of pure gold, with a tress of snow-white hair on the back, knotted together with a band of diamonds, so small that they looked like threads of light. It was a sweet old face that looked upon him, bedded there in the gold; a soft, lovable face with blue eyes, innocent as a child's, and an impudent double chin, in harmony with the white hair rolled back from that calm forehead.

There was a gleam of rich brocade about the shoulders and lace at the bosom. Seymour fell into thought as he gazed on this picture. It was mournful to see it there among the refuse of that disreputable place. What if the lady had been his mother or grandmother?

This thought brought a faint flush of colour into the young man's face. Perhaps the bare idea wounded his patrician pride. At any rate you could see that a generous thought of rescuing the picture from its degradation had seized upon him. His eyes were bright, almost anxious, as he inquired the price. He had no use for it, but could not find the heart to leave it there.

"It is worth twenty pounds for old gold," said the broker. "I will throw the painting in."

Seymour paid for the miniature, placed it tenderly in his bosom and walked away, leaving the pawnbroker almost in tears because he had not asked an additional ten per cent. on all the articles.

"If I'd only known how much he would bear," lamented the man to himself. "Why, the fellow never once attempted to beat me down, and wouldn't if I'd asked double. But I always was a coward—a mean coward—afraid to set a price on my own soul. What's the good of these ten, twenty, thirty gold sovereigns when it might have been twice as much. Oh, the gentleman has robbed me with his still manner and thoughtful face. It might have been double! It might have been double."

Meantime Seymour had walked quietly towards his hotel, making his own combinations. The porters were busy carrying up his trunks while the dressing-case and desk were brought in. Everything was in order. His rooms would soon have a home-like appearance.

When the chandelier was lighted over his head that evening an ebony desk, mounted with silver, and filled in all its compartments with papers, stood open on the table before him, and in the shaded light of the bed-room beyond was a dressing-case, with all its toilet paraphernalia laid out ready for use.

Seymour rang the bell and desired that the landlord should be sent for. That personage made his appearance and stood some minutes at the door, while his guest was busily writing. At last Seymour looked up.

"Ah, I beg pardon. You are the landlord?"
 "I am the proprietor of the hotel," said mine host, a little nettled.

"Oh, certainly; step in if you please. Is there a person in your establishment who would take charge of my things?"

"That is, you want a servant," said the landlord, still upon his dignity.

"Not exactly. But I should like to have a person generally at my command."

"One was here this morning. He seems a bright boy."

"Send him up."

The landlord disappeared.

After a time a knock at the door aroused Seymour again, and a young man, scarcely more than a lad, came in. He was very thin, rather untidy, but had a look of quick intelligence that pleased the traveller at once. With a single glance of his great bright eyes the lad took in every object the room contained.

"You sent for me, sir," he said.

"You? Oh, yes; you are the person I desired to be sent up. Well, what can you do?"

"Almost anything, sir?"

"Do you know London?"

"I can find the way anywhere," answered the lad, evasively.

"Have you ever been in service?"

"Never; but I know what a gentleman wants, and can do as much as another."

"But I might want something out of the common way."

"Not knowing exactly what the common way is, that would not trouble me much."

"What wages will you want?"

"Whatever you are willing to give."

"Very well, we will settle that after I have learned something of your capabilities. But your clothes are not exactly suitable for a gentleman's attendant."

The youth looked down on his coat, which was wrinkled and clouded in its colour.

"They have been in the water," he said, with a shiver.

"Have you no others?"

"No, I have nothing else."

"Here, go out and buy a neat outfit. I suppose the shops are open yet. It must have been a heavy storm that drenched you so."

The young man reached forth his hand for the gold which Seymour held towards him.

"It was a shipwreck—a hard choice between fire or water, sir."

"Indeed! Some other time you shall tell me about it, but just now I am anxious to see you in neater trim."

"But—but, sir, can I spend a little of this money for food?"

"Food! Why, man, you don't mean to say that you are in such a strait as that?"

"I am nearly starved."

Seymour started from his chair and rang the bell violently. The youth had made a step forward to render this service, and came into the full light. Then, for the first time, Seymour saw how meagre and white his face was. The wonderful brilliancy of his eyes sprang from protracted and ravenous craving for food.



[MRS. LANDER AND THE LAWYER.]

"Poor fellow," said Seymour, "poor fellow! I did not dream of it! Wait a minute."

A servant entered, answering the bell promptly.

"Bring up something to eat, and a bottle of wine, at once."

"What will you order, sir?"

"Order? Beefsteak and plenty of potatoes."

The servant bowed, and went out somewhat astonished. Seymour laughed lightly, and turned upon the youth, who met his look with eyes full of tears.

"Oh, sir, you are too kind," he said.

"Not a bit, my good fellow; nobody on earth can be too kind; it is not the fault of human nature. But no one shall say that I'm not hard-hearted for all that, especially if anyone offends me."

"Shall I go downstairs, sir?" asked the youth, who was shaking with an eager hope of food.

"No. I want to see you eat. Jove! how I envy you."

The youth drew back and leaned against the wall, clasping his hands hard, as if imploring the minutes to pass quickly. At length a sob of joy broke from his lips. He could hear a jingle of crockery coming up the stairs.

Seymour started up, removed the desk from his table, and ordered the waiter to place his tray there, directly under the chandelier. The man obeyed, and lifted the cover from a beef-steak, which soon filled the room with its appetizing flavour.

The man withdrew.

"Come," said Seymour, "come along. What's your name?"

"Brian."

"Brian—Brian! But I suppose you've another name?"

Seymour spoke with a touch of impatience. The boy lifted those great bright eyes to his face for one instant, but turned them eagerly towards the food.

"The other name, I meant—the other name first," cried Seymour.

"It's Nolan, Brian Nolan, sir," answered the lad, with an eager catch of the breath.

"Nolan," muttered the young man, "Nolan!"

The boy did not heed him, the pangs of hunger were too keen; he quivered all over with impatience.

"That's right, my poor fellow; that's right, fall to without mercy. Sit down, sit down and be comfortable."

Seymour rolled up his own soft Turkish chair to the table and patted its crimson cushions enticingly.

Truly his good nature must have been genuine when he could so far forget the niceties of refine-

ment. The lad required no second bidding. His eyes took fire as they devoured the smoking food. With the craving of a wild beast he crept slowly towards the table, evidently striving hard to control himself.

Seymour stood with his elbow on the mantelpiece, watching the poor fellow with a glow of satisfaction as he devoured the steak.

"By the way, stop a minute, my good fellow; it just strikes me that too much isn't good for a person in your condition. The half of that steak is a rather powerful allowance, and that is the third potato."

"Let me finish this," pleaded the lad.

"Couldn't think of it," answered the young man, replacing the covers on the dishes with decision. Then he rang the bell.

The lad, with his hunger but half appeased, dropped the knife and fork, closed his eyes, and fell back in the easy-chair, sighing heavily.

"Take the things away!" said Seymour when the waiter came in.

The man went out, closing the door behind him. Seymour stood watching the pale face of the lad with a feeling of singular interest.

"This is what money can do," he thought. "Cheap, too, and yet how much happiness. Why, that one meal was like a fortune to him. But to be kind, to give great happiness, one must have money."

While these thoughts passed through the young man's brain two great tears stole through the closed lashes of the Irish lad and rolled slowly down his cheeks.

"That's the kind of diamonds I'll buy with the money, if they'll only let me," continued Seymour, still gazing on the lad. "It isn't just to enjoy things myself that I want it, but—but—"

With the gesture of a man who finds his reflections beginning to grow troublesome, Seymour dropped his hand on the lad's shoulder.

"Come now, wake up and get to bed, Brian," he exclaimed, cheerfully. "We will let the clothes go till morning."

Brian looked up, and Seymour saw that his great black eyes were full of tears, while his face quivered all over with grateful emotion.

"Oh, sir, how I thank you—how good you have been to me! What can I do for you?"

"Go to bed now, and forget the last hour, if you can. It has been a little irregular as between master and servant, and may put false notions into your head."

"No no, no. You have been kind—so kind, I can

remember nothing but that. Heaven bless you, sir, and prosper you in everything. I'd rather be your servant than another man's king."

The boy attempted to rise, but Seymour pressed a hand on his shoulder, detaining him.

"So your name is Nolan, and you came from Ireland," he said, trembling as he spoke, though his words seemed calm.

"Yes, sir; oh, yes!"

"What part of Ireland, my fine fellow, what part?"

"On the Blackwater, near Waterford."

The young man was disturbed; he walked the room once or twice, then bent over the lad again.

"And your father, what was his name?"

"John, sir, John Nolan."

"Of Bydehurst?" said Seymour.

The boy looked up quickly.

"Yes, that was the name of his place when he had one," answered the lad.

"And how did he lose it?"

"He sold it, sir."

"Sold it—sold it! Why? How?"

"I would rather not talk about that," answered the boy.

"But where is your father now?"

"Dead."

Seymour sallied back and clenched one hand with a sudden spasm.

"And—and your mother?"

The young man's voice shook as he asked this question, and he was pale as marble.

"She is dead too."

"What! What!"

These words were uttered almost with a cry of anguish. The young man's head fell upon the back of the easy-chair, and he gasped at the cushions nervously with his hands.

"They are all dead—one after another they went down," said the boy, in a plaintive whisper.

"Was it in the shipwreck?"

"The steamer was on fire."

"And they jumped overboard?"

"All."

"None saved—not one?"

"I alone—I alone."

"Go," said the young man, "go to sleep, if you can."

"Good-night, and thank you again and again. I hope you will never be so hungry or so lonesome as I was."

"Good-night—good-night, boy."

(To be continued)



[EVANGELINE'S EARLY VISIT.]

GOLDEN FAVOURS.

CHAPTER V.

Two days afterwards Hal came with his mother to introduce her to Tanglewood and to her future daughter-in-law. The Earles were all condescension and complaisance. Mrs. Halstead was somewhat amused, but her eager interest was increased when Evangeline came in, as usual, in perfect contrast to that half-hour's tediousness spent with her relatives. The soft, dark eyes gave a hasty scrutiny over the grave, somewhat melancholy, but thoroughly handsome face, and Evangeline then gave one bright, happy glance into her lover's face, thereby most effectually winning the tender mother's heart, then came gracefully and half eagerly to Mrs. Halstead's side, and said, with winning ingenuousness:

"My dear Mrs. Halstead, you make me so happy by your coming. And I shall not be afraid of you as I feared. I shall love you dearly. Will you make me such a good little girl as shall deserve your son?"

The lovely eyes were fixed pleadingly on her face, the red lips sweetly tremulous with an agitated smile, the melodious voice thrilled with a rich vein of tenderness. Of course Mrs. Halstead was charmed. She no longer wondered at Hal's enthusiasm. She put her arm around the slender waist, drew the girl to her side, and left a mother's kiss on the rosy lips. Hal looked on in blissful intoxication of happiness.

"May we take you home with us?" asked Mrs. Halstead presently, longing to see more of the young lady, but equally anxious to get away from Mrs. Seraphina's frivolous conversation.

"Then you can see Nannie, who was not well enough to come to-day."

"I should enjoy the visit. But who is Nannie? Oh, I have heard nothing about her."

"She is like a daughter to me and sister to Hal. She has lived with us from a child. I hope you will love her very dearly."

"I think there is little doubt of it if she is anything like you or your son. Oh, it is such a comfort to meet with true, honest-hearted people."

This was spoken *sotto voce*, with an expressive, melancholy glance towards her own relatives. Mrs. Halstead, herself under the spell, forgot her remonstrance to Hal, and returned a sympathizing glance.

The result was that Nannie, pale but tranquil, sitting in her chamber, with her Bible in her hand,

saw the carriage drive up the walk, and going down to meet them, was startled by seeing a graceful figure spring forth from behind Mrs. Halstead, while a bright, haughty, surpassingly lovely face, beneath a graceful French hat, was turned upon her in a single instant, keen, sharp, questioning.

It was only for a moment, but in that brief time between the two natures flashed an intuition, electric, magnetic, or whatever term you may use to designate that inexplicable conviction that so often comes over us, we know not wherefore, or whence, but which we never refuse to accept.

"What is this girl?" mentally demanded, imperiously, Evangeline Earle; "how is she to cross my path? for I know she is a foe. A subtle spell I own warns me of it. I shall be on my guard against her."

"Oh, how wicked and selfish I am," secretly moaned Nannie. "I do not like her. I shall never like her."

Miss Earle advanced, nevertheless, with, what seemed to Hal, wondrous ease and grace.

"And this is Nannie. She will give a kind word, I hope, to Evangeline Earle."

"Thank you, Miss Earle; how do you do?" This was all poor Nannie's stammering lips murmured forth.

How awkward and even unkind it seemed after that frank, ingenuous greeting. Hal, for the first time in his life, felt ashamed of her. The bright dark eyes, looking into his face, read its expression, and so did Nannie too, and she felt distressed.

With a gay laugh Evangeline Earle tripped on after Mrs. Halstead, and Hal followed in tender devotion.

Nannie was left a moment on the doorstep. Her lip quivered, there came a wistful sorrow into her blue eyes. But the tears gathering under the white lids did not fall.

"She knew that a pang had struck home to my heart and she triumphed in it. I saw it when her eyes flashed from me to Hal. She shall not see me weak again," thought she as a faint glow stole over her pale cheek.

And in a few moments she walked into the drawing-room dressed with exceeding care, and very becomingly. Miss Earle just lifted her delicately pencilled eyebrows when the slender little figure in the deep blue silk with the chaste pearl ornaments entered the room.

"Miss Nannie is very sweet, very *jolie*," said she, carelessly, to Hal, who was turning over a portfolio of engravings for her inspection, "but how very

much of a child she is, so innocent, and so diffident, so *distracte*."

"She does not appear quite to advantage, she has been ill for some time. We were much alarmed about her one day. What day was it? Ah, I remember, a day I shall never forget, that when I saw you first."

The dark shining eyes dilated, a little meer flitted over the lips and vanished.

"Ah, how sad! You came home and found the dear little one ailing! How pathetic!"

Hal looked over to the grave, set face, and said, musingly:

"I don't see why it is, but she is greatly changed. She was always before like a sunbeam, and now——"

"She is rather like a storm cloud, I fancy," laughed Evangeline. "Ah, well, we women have strange whims sometimes. You must bear with us until the caprice has left."

And Miss Earle walked over to Nannie's side, and in the most polite terms, the most dulcet tones, tortured her as only an artful woman can. Hal's words and Nannie's face had given the latter's sorrowful secret to the mercy of the new comer, and she was one to use it dexterously. Guileless and frank-hearted and childish as Nannie seemed, she had quick fine intuitions, and Evangeline Earle had not addressed her thrice before she was aware that a merciless war was secretly declared. Nannie was spirited too, in her own fashion, and though her cheeks were pale, and her hands unsteady, she wore a bold front, and managed to give back to the mocking, triumphant eyes a calm defiance.

But the cards were all in the fair hands of Evangeline Earle, and she played them in a skilful manner.

"What lovely hair you have, Miss Nannie; I do so dote on that golden brown, and those little short curls. If mine would only come out of these long ringlets. You don't look in the least like my friends here, I should never have suspected you to be a relative."

"I am not," replied Nannie, drawing instinctively away from the white hands which were playing with her hair.

"What, no relation at all! Then they are——oh, I see. They are your guardians. How stupid I am. Mr. Halstead takes care of your property. You are his ward. That is why you seem so much like a child to him."

Two thrusts given in the sweetest possible voice. Nannie felt them stinging in the very depths of her sensitive heart, but she forced herself to speak calmly in reply.

"I am neither a relative nor a ward; I have no property whatever, nor have I ever felt the need of any."

"Is that an enigma for me to guess, sweet child?"

"I am no child. I am as sensible as you. And I do not give enigmas. I have been taught to speak and act openly. My mother died and left me alone in the house where Mrs. Halstead lived also. That kind friend took me to her heart, and I have not lacked a mother's love since."

"How affecting! How exceedingly good and noble these people must be that you could grow up here, and never feel the weight of an obligation which, in other cases, would crush a girl to the earth. And they not wealthy either, as yet receiving only the stipulated income which I find sometimes very narrow for me alone. It revives one's belief in goodness and innocence to hear it."

While she spoke Evangeline's eyes dwelt admiringly upon the rich blue silk dress, and the pearl ornaments—admirably, but meaningly.

Nannie comprehended every unspoken thought.

The blood rushed madly to her pale cheeks, and the blue eyes flashed indignantly as she replied:

"Thank heaven, there are no arid calculations here. I have been as free to accept as they to give. I know that I am gladly received as a daughter, and that I give a daughter's affection and service in return. Mrs. Halstead would suffer from my absence: there are many ways in which I am indispensable to her. Hal," said she, raising her voice as he entered the room after a visit to the flower-garden, bearing his hands full of fragrant trophies, "take Miss Earle to see that curious German automatic toy on the *étager* yonder."

"Or rather bring it where we can both see it. Don't send me away, Miss Nannie. I like you so much. We must be true friends."

And as she spoke Evangeline Earle laid one white hand caressingly on Nannie's shoulder, and turned her bright, beautiful face smilingly towards Hal.

The young man crossed the room with a buoyant step, his face beaming with glad delight and tenderness upon the pair.

"Oh! that is so charming for me to see," he said; "you must, indeed, be friends, you two, for my sake." And he laid a bouquet in either hand.

Nannie rose with hers, and said, in a faint voice:

"I am very tired; you will excuse me; I am sure, and let me go upstairs to rest."

"Let me go too," cried Evangeline, eagerly. "I shall like it of all things. We can talk so freely and pleasantly while you rest."

Nannie shut her lips firmly. She found her fortitude fast deserting her, and the presence of this girl in her chamber she knew would be nothing less than torture.

"Excuse me, if you please," said she, hastily and freeing. "I should get no rest if you were there."

And before there could be any remonstrating she hurried away.

Evangeline Earle stood, bouquet in hand, with downcast eyelids, and before she lifted them she brushed across them her filmy handkerchief as if to remove the tell-tale tears. Her voice quivered as she said, looking up wistfully into Hal's suddenly clouded face:

"I wonder what I have done that she will not accept my friendship. I have built such beautiful castles about our growing attachment, but I fear they must all fall. She does not like me. She will never be my friend."

"Nay, nay, dearest Evangeline, do not look so hopeless. I admit that Nannie's conduct is inexplicable. I am tempted to be angry with her. But I am certain it is owing to her illness; her nerves are weak, perhaps irritable. It will be different by-and-by. She has naturally one of the sweetest dispositions. We must have another physician to her. I confess her appearance to-day increases my apprehension."

"How kind you are to her! It is very generous in you."

"Why, there is little generosity in love, is there? It is so voluntary. We cannot help loving good, sweet and beautiful things, I think."

She was watching every shade of expression on his frank face, and presently asked, slowly:

"Do you love her so much as that?"

He looked a little puzzled, but replied, promptly:

"My love for Nannie has grown with my years, no sister could be dearer. I do not think I could be truly happy, though every wish of my own were gratified, if Nannie were in trouble."

"I wonder that you didn't wish to marry her," abruptly replied Evangeline Earle.

Hal laughed and coloured a little while he touched lightly the fair hands crossed idly over the bouquet.

"I had my betrothed vows waiting at an unknown

shrine. Can you picture my relief when I found my heart joyfully eager to follow in the path of duty?"

She did not answer him; her eyes were downcast. There was a slight contraction of the rosy lips, a scarcely perceptible shiver of the delicate frame.

"I am sorry that Nannie's listlessness troubles you. No one will grieve over it more than she when she is well again. Do not think it anything serious, for it is not. Now come and see what a pretty marvel a German artisan has made for us."

They were still chatting over the toy when Mrs. Halstead entered, and asked, quickly:

"Where is Nannie?"

"She was tired and went to rest more than an hour since. Might I go up with you and say that I am sorry I helped to fatigue her? Perhaps I can do something for her. I can bathe her temples. They say that I have a peculiar magnetic gift for dispelling pain. I will stroke her forehead very gently if she has the headache," said Evangeline.

"To be sure, if Hal can endure your absence."

"I would cheerfully undergo a great many privations to relieve Nannie from illness," replied Hal.

They went softly into Nannie's chamber and found her lying down, her sweet, wasted face almost as white as the pillows in which it was buried. A small Bible was lying beside her, and Mrs. Halstead knew that its teachings had brought that peaceful, submissive look into her face.

Evangeline Earle gazed momentarily from this beautiful picture of innocence, and the resolute antagonism which had arisen in her heart shrank back in a nameless awe. She walked softly to the dressing-table and busied herself with arranging her hair. But something she saw there flung open the portals of a spirit tenfold more malignant. In the small jewel box placed carelessly on the table with open lid she caught the dull gleam of a peculiar ring. A heavy circlet of chased gold of a very peculiar pattern.

Mrs. Halstead was bending over Nannie with her back to the dressing-table, and her person interposing prevented Nannie's observation. Evangeline's hasty glance was sufficient. She stooped down, took out the ring, and looked eagerly upon the inner surface, reading carefully the words, and taking notice of the initials traced there.

As she replaced the ring a baleful, wicked gleam shot across her face, and she bit her lip a moment in iron determination.

But it was with a smile very dazzling in its brightness that she stepped softly to the couch.

"I am going to nurse you a little, frail little darling. Does your head ache? I know it does by your eyes. There, you need not talk at all. I will soothe you off to sleep. I have a magic spell at my finger tips. See how soon it will help you."

While she spoke she laid quickly and softly a gentle touch upon the throbbing forehead.

The rapid touches fell like a shower of snowflakes. Nannie could not tell exactly when, but beneath the cool fingers arose a relieving sense of delicious coolness. The pain grew numb and torpid, and a welcome, blissful languor followed it. Her last consciousness was a vague wonder that such contentment could come to her from those hands, and then she fell asleep.

Evangeline Earle was in no hurry to go back to the drawing-room and the lover waiting there. Truth to tell, he already wearied her. The only satisfaction she obtained from his devotion was the excitement of showing off to this weak little creature her power and fascination. A true, simple, honest nature like Hal's had no attraction for a mind vitiated by the artificial, intoxicating excitements of Paris. Yet she meant to marry him all the same. She took a seat by the bedside, and with her hand leaning against the pillow waited quietly while the girl slept so peacefully.

Once she turned to look upon the sweet, innocent sleeper with a wicked smile. Then her head drooped again to her hand and she was lost in an absorbing reverie.

Mrs. Halstead coming back from a brief visit to her own chamber, found her thus. Raising her head with a gentle smile, the watcher pointed to the bedside triumphantly and then softly withdrew to the other side of the room. As if in a careless caprice of the moment she laid her hand on the antique ring.

"What is this? I am sure it has a history, it is so bizarre," said she, in a whisper.

"It is Nannie's. It was her mother's wedding-ring, and her father's mother wore it first at her wedding. I remember Mrs. O'Brien speaking about it once. They took it off from the dead mother's hand for Nannie, who values it very highly. It is almost the only thing she has to remind her of her mother. There was a box of little trinkets, but it was stolen at the time of Mrs. O'Brien's death, and this ring is all the poor child's inheritance."

"Tell me more about her. I love to hear it. Did you know her relatives, any of them?"

"Only the mother. She was a poor feeble creature, in a consumption when I first knew her. A sorrowful, heartbroken woman, but dignified. She never told me any of her troubles. I always thought she meant to confide in me, but she died suddenly, while I was away, that very day of Mr. Allen's funeral."

And her name was O'Brien. It is not a very uncommon name. It was very, very kind in you, dear madam, to care for the poor forsaken orphan. There are plenty of people who would have left her to starve, and there are very few girls at her present age who would consent to remain dependant upon bounty. But one can see she is as innocent as a lamb. Dear girl, I am so glad I got her to sleep."

"And I am so happy to find the young lady who is to be my son's wife so kind-hearted and sympathizing," said Mrs. Halstead, kissing her.

Nannie slept a long time, and only woke when Miss Earle ran up to kiss and wish her good-bye.

Mrs. Halstead followed her and heard her ask, caressingly:

"Oh, dearest Nannie, may I take home this quaint ring of yours? Uncle Dacus is a dotting admirer of such things. To write down a description and the poetry in rhyme in his notebook will give him a week's satisfaction. I will be so careful, and you shall have it again to-morrow."

Nannie scarcely understood why she felt such distress at this proposal. She coloured, hesitated, and then seeing the grieved astonishment on Mrs. Halstead's face, replied, hastily:

"Take it, oh, yes, but pray be careful of it. I would rather lose everything I possess than that ring."

"I'll be sure to remember. You're a dear little creature. Don't forget me, and don't have the headache when I come again."

She left a Judas kiss on the fair forehead, and tripped down to meet Hal and be tenderly placed by him in the light carriage in which he was to drive her back to Tanglewood.

"I have spent such a delightful day. I shall come often if your mother will let me," was her parting salutation.

He looked back with happy, proud and lover-like emotions at the graceful figure, the smiling face turned archly towards him, and waving his hand in adieu drove home, for the twentieth time congratulating himself upon the great prize fortune had thrust in his hand.

She stood leaning against the pillared vestibule long after the sound of his wheels had died out into stillness, gazing at the ring, which she had slipped upon her finger over the gloves.

"Shall I take them into my confidence? that is the question," murmured she. Then shaking her head slowly, she added, "No, not unless it is absolutely necessary. One can best keep one's own counsel in *Ruse de guerre*."

Saying which she walked quietly into the house. Mrs. Seraphina met her in the upper hall.

"So you have come at last. You made such a long day of it. I am sure you were happy. What do you think of them? And their home, is it aristocratic like Tanglewood?"

"Not at all like this place, but a very cosy, comfortable spot. They are truly good and refined people. Nevertheless I am quite exhausted. Let me be unmolested."

She closed the door of her chamber upon the disappointed Madame Seraphina, and no one saw her again that night. Yet towards midnight, when the house was utterly quiet, a soft step stole from her door and made its way into the mock library, and to the misty drawers of a pretentious bureau. Putting down her candle, the girl coolly looked over the contents until she found a dingy, time-discoloured paper box. She opened it with eager fingers. A heavy lead circlet fell out as nicely fretted and chased as if its dull surface had been of gold, and evidently a model. She took it, and laid it on her white palm beside the gold ring which had been removed from the dead hand of Nannie's mother, turning them around and eyeing them with sharp, searching glances. At length she laid the circlet back into its ancient receptacle, arranged Mr. Dacus's drawer into its former order, and went back to her chamber.

Then she extinguished her candle and sat down in the dimness of the window.

"Miss Nannie O'Brien," muttered she, in a sharp, pitiless voice, "I know now why I hated you when I first saw you. I meant to plague and tease you then, now it is war between us—war to the death."

CHAPTER VI

EARLY the next morning, as he was passing down the walk towards the outer gateway of the pretty

little place Nannie had christened The Rosary, Halstead was surprised to see a sleek black pony with a graceful rider bounding towards him.

She pushed away the blending snowy plumes and jetty curls, and exclaimed, in her sweet, musical accents, as she checked the pony:

"Oh, Hal, I am so thankful to see you. I have such a misfortune to communicate."

"What do you mean, dear Evangeline?" cried Hal, with consternation on his quivering lips and dismal face; "has anything happened at your home?"

"No, oh, no, but something dreadful has happened for all that. I have been like one distracted all the morning. I cannot blame my foolishness and carelessness enough. Oh, I dare not tell you, and how shall I ever have courage to meet her?"

"What is the matter? I cannot imagine any cause for this distress."

"Oh, Hal, but you will when I tell you I have lost that ring I borrowed of Nannie to show to my uncle."

A blank look fell over Hal's face.

"There; I knew you would feel just the same. What shall I do? When I meant to propitiate her by my unceasing efforts it is cruel to have this happen. She will never forgive me. I know it, and I deserve it," cried the girl, hiding her face from his observation, but speaking in a tone full of distress and agitation.

"Don't be so frightened—no, darling, you are not to blame in the least," said Hal, soothingly, while he clasped in his daintily gloved hand which had dropped the ring, and spoke with all a lover's fondness.

It touched him to see her sorrow and her pretty reliance upon him.

"You need not be so troubled, Evangeline dearest. I think we shall find the ring."

"Oh, if you only can you will have my everlasting gratitude. I thought it might possibly have fallen into the carriage. Can I go and help you to search? But I don't want her to see me. I am so afraid of her now."

"Afraid of our gentle, innocent Nannie? How absurd!"

"Gentle to those she loves, but not to me. She did not like me yesterday. If you had seen, if you had heard how harsh and chilling—but what am I saying? I did not mean to tell you. I resolved rather to win her love. And this is the commencement. Oh, what evil spirit prompted me to think of taking that ring home? I know she will never forgive me."

Her graceful head rested on the daintily gloved hands, and Evangeline's sobs nearly drove all sense out of Hal's foolish head.

"Hush, my darling, my pride, my joy; this grief is absurd. What can Nannie have done to have caused you such a terror of her displeasure? I am ashamed of her. I shall let her see my indignation."

"No; oh, no," cried the broken voice, pathetically; but beneath the gloved hands the dark blue eyes were sparkling exultantly. She will resent this reproach, and grow haughty and really detestable through wounded pride. It will work famously."

"I do not blame her at all. Nothing can replace such a ring. I have brought all mine as a slight atonement—see."

And thrusting her hand into her pocket she brought it forth with a string of rings fastened to a small chain.

"Take them, dear Hal, and tell her I know they are nothing in comparison to that ring, but I shall feel a little less guilty if she will receive them."

"Foolish child, generous little heart. If Nannie would like any other ring she may have it; but I will not allow her to be so unreasonable and hard-hearted as to blame you. She could not have the conscience to be so if she saw you now. Do you know, my Evangeline, you are like a chameleon? You show me a new character every time I see you. Once so stately and so grand, I was half shy of you, then charmingly familiar and graceful, and now impetuous, eager, frightened—a precious, precious, child-like creature which I am more in love with than either of the others."

"Oh, you mustn't do anything but scold me as I deserve. But if you have any love for me search the carriage, and, if the ring be not there, break the dreadful news to her. I shall never dare to face her until she sends for me. I am afraid to stay any longer now. Good-bye, dear Hal."

She wheeled her horse round, waved him a farewell, and vanished from sight, her curls floating lightly on the breeze, the white plume nodding gaily over her graceful head.

"My charming, charming Evangeline!" murmured Hal as he turned again towards the doors. "How can Nannie help loving you? What evil spirit can have taken possession of Nannie?"

The fair equestrian cantered away in the most

brilliant spirit. Her eyes shone, her cheeks glowed. Everyone who met her turned an admiring glance after her, exclaiming:

"What a beautiful woman, and how happy she is." Well, she was happy for the moment, after a wild, feverish way.

"The wedge is introduced. We shall see the rent shortly. Misunderstanding, resentment, jealous anger will rage for her with the son. My next move is on the mother's side. She owned that she was useful and could not be spared. I'll show her differently. I'll have lost my usual tact if, in a week's time, I have not made myself twice as necessary to madam. That will be the last drop to be wrested from the mother's thoughts and needs. I do believe that silly girl will go away voluntarily after that. *Allons, allons*, good Rosamond, I would rival the winds to-day."

She rode swiftly along the highway and turned into the cool green lane, which was a shorter route to Tanglewood. At the very junction of this lane with the highway was a clump of tall bushes, and as the black pony and his rider came opposite them a man stepped forth, lifted his hat from his exquisitely arranged hair, and bowed gallantly. Evangeline started at him as if his presence had paralyzed all her faculties.

"*Bon jour*, Mademoiselle Evangeline," said the gentleman, advancing a little nearer to the equestrian.

"Monsieur Pierre L'Estrange!" ejaculated the girl, slightly recovering self-possession.

"Pierre L'Estrange, and no one else, Evangeline. Have you no word of greeting for me?"

She placed her hand upon the pommel of the saddle to steady herself and hide the great tremor which shook her whole form.

"How came you in England?" demanded she, almost sternly.

"The steamer brought me. But you may spare your anathemas. Had there been no other way I should have tried a swim, or even been romantic enough to have made myself another *Leander*, and perished in the attempt to reach you."

"And after all our pains you found us out?"

"Of course I did. *La grande passion* is more inspiring than any other. Oh, Evangeline, Evangeline, I have pined, I have perished, I have almost gone mad to find you; and now that we meet you are like ice. Speak to me. You must speak to me one word of gladness. You are glad to see me once more, even if I have come *de trop*, and interfere with your plans. Say that you are, Evangeline."

He advanced promptly to the horse, and taking the rein led the way into the shady lane, walking slowly by her side, taking in his her unresisting hand.

"Look at me, Evangeline," said he, presently, in a rich, full voice, with its one haughty chord.

She hesitated a little, then lifted her drooping eyelids and flashed upon him a bright, rapturous glance, strangely mingled with perplexity and admiration.

How handsome he looked. A talented, subtle, fascinating man of the world, and a Frenchman, plainly shown by the exquisite neatness of his dress, and by his graceful, rapid, bewildering gestures.

"My beautiful! my darling!" he murmured, softly. "You love me now, as you have always loved me?"

She said nothing. Her head was drooping, her cheeks flushed scarlet. How unlike the self-possessed, calculating woman who had listened so unmoved to Hal Halstead's rhapsodies. A single glance at the agitated face showed that this haughty nature had found its master in Monsieur Pierre L'Estrange.

"And you thought to hide from me?" said he, reproachfully. "Did you not know that I would discover you, though swallowed in the unknown arctic zone?"

"I did not want you to come yet, Pierre. I am not ready for you. You will distract me—you will mar my progress."

"And you still persist in following that odious command? Have you met the plebeian lover yet?"

She sighed heavily.

"I have. I wish you not come, Pierre."

"I could not live any longer without seeing you. Oh, that you had felt one half my misery, then you could pity me."

"It has been dull and tame enough. But I have managed to exist by picturing the grandness of the future."

"And what is that, *ademoiselle* Evangeline?"

"An establishment worthy my tastes—my actual requirements," said she.

He folded his arms and glanced upon her angrily.

"What use, Pierre?" continued she, unable to bear that glance. "We talked it all over in Paris. We

are both poor, and we both require luxury and ease I shall take the only way possible for me to obtain my wishes. This simple youth can be moulded like wax by my hands."

"You dare not tell me you love him?" cried Monsieur Pierre, savagely.

"Love him!" she laughed, scornfully, as she repeated the words. "No, oh no, Pierre. I love only you. I am not ashamed to admit it. When I am safely at the head of such an establishment as this *marriage de convenance* will give me I shall be free to enjoy your society unmolested."

"And the husband? Will these Parisian customs be à l'Anglais?"

Her lip curled scornfully.

"I told you I was to be the mistress. Listen to reason, Pierre."

"I shall have difficulty to keep myself from chastising him every time he dares to give you a lover-like glance."

"I wish you had remained away a little longer," said she, musingly, "but since you have come you must promise to be discreet."

"I will make this compact if you will be gracious and kind."

"I should never be otherwise if I could help it, Pierre," answered she, with a tender glance.

Slowly passing on into the lovely byroad with its veiling curtains of falling vine and drooping boughs, she sitting carelessly on the saddle, he walking beside her, let us leave them and go back to Nannie—pure-minded, tender-hearted sufferer that she has become. A night's quiet rest and freedom from all excitement Nannie had promised herself would be able to remove this nightmare antipathy against the beautiful betrothed of Hal.

But, to her grief and dismay, the morning's sober reflection and careless, impartial repetition of all the circumstances, the tones of her voice, her flashing, burning glance, every word and look recalled, deepened the impression.

And earnestly and honestly as Nannie tried to persuade herself it was her own jealous anger which coloured the vision, she only sorrowfully acknowledged in the end that she still looked upon Evangeline Earle as a secret enemy, at whose hand she was to receive still deeper injury.

(To be continued.)

THE FIRST WEDDING.—A short time ago the little village of Small Hythe, near Tenterden, in Kent, was wrought up into a state of excitement by an event which had never before been experienced there. This event, although hitherto unknown in the annals of Small Hythe, is in itself a very ordinary one. The fact is, that the curious old church of that poor place, which had been in use for divine service for upwards of 850 years, and in 1514 was licensed by Archbishop Wareham for funerals, never before witnessed a marriage. The parties whose names stand first on its marriage register are Mr. Thomas Austen, son of Mr. John Austen, farmer, of Broad Tenterden, within Small Hythe district, and Miss Louisa Fowl, of Tenterden. What with the bridal party within and the carriages without, and those who witnessed the ceremony and those who remained outside, the usually peaceful hamlet hardly knew itself, and it took some time to restore it to its wonted placidity.

WEDDING-DAYS.—No marriages are celebrated on Sunday in Scotland, while in England it is the favourite day of the week for marriage, 32 per cent. of the marriages being contracted on that day. Monday is a favourite day in both countries. Saturday in England is the third day of the week in order of selection for marriage, 17 per cent. occurring on that day; but in Scotland no true Scot will marry on a Saturday, nor, indeed, begin any work of importance. With the Scot Saturday is an unlucky day for marriage, and he is impressed with the superstitious belief that if he married on a Saturday one of the parties would die before the expiry of the year, or that, if both survived, the marriage would prove unfruitful. Hence it happens that Sunday and Saturday the two favourite days for marriage in England, are blank days for marriage in Scotland. Friday is the day on which the English do not marry, but in Scotland it is one of the favourite days for marriage.

A CELEBRATED CHARACTER.—Réné Lartigue was a Swiss, and a man about sixty. He actually spent the last fifteen years in the Palais Royal—that is to say, he spent the third of his life at dinner. Every morning at ten o'clock he was to be seen going into a restaurant (usually Tisast's), and in a few moments was installed in a corner, which he only quitted about three in the afternoon, after having drunk at least six or seven bottles of different kinds of wine. He then walked up and down the garden till the clock struck five, when he made his appearance again at

the same restaurant, and always at the same place. His second meal, at which he drank quite as much as at the first, invariably lasted till half-past nine. Therefore, he devoted nine hours a day to eating and drinking. His dress was most wretched—his shoes broken, his trousers torn, his paleot without any lining and patched, his waistcoat without buttons, his hat a rusty red from old age, and the whole surmounted by a dirty white beard. One day he went up to the comptoir and asked the presiding divinity there to allow him to run in debt for one day's dinner. He perceived some hesitation in complying with the request, and immediately called one of the waiters and desired him to follow him. He went into the office, unbuttoned a certain indispensable garment, and taking off a broad leather belt, somewhat startled the waiter by displaying 200 gold pieces, each worth 100 francs. Taking up one of them, he tossed it to the waiter and desired him to pay what he owed. He never again appeared at that restaurant and died recently of indigestion.

THE ADULTERATION OF BEER.

THE Commissioners of Inland Revenue, in their Report lately issued, show that the quantity of beer brewed in the United Kingdom during the financial year of 1865 was upwards of 25,000,000 barrels, which is an increase in the last ten years of 41 per cent. The value of such beer, even supposing it to be worth only a shilling a gallon, would very nearly be 50,000,000*l.* sterling, and as the same report tells us that beer is now much adulterated, it would be both interesting and important to know the nature and exact amount of the sophistication practised on our national drink before being actually sent into consumption.

Of the numerous substances employed to adulterate beer the following are some of the most common—coriander and caraway seeds, camomile, quassia, chiretta, wormwood, sweet flag, salt, saltpetre, sulphate of iron, coculus indicus, and tobacco. These may be divided into two classes—namely, those which are harmless, and those which cannot be used even in small quantity without injury. The former class includes all except *coccus indicus* and tobacco, which belong to the latter class. Since the repeal of the hop duty brewers are allowed to use quassia and bitters of a like nature instead of hops, yet these, after all, must be designated adulterants, for the public expect that the ale and porter they purchase are brewed wholly from malt and hops, as they are intended for use as beverages and not as medicines. The brewer's province is to brew beer, and not to compound physic, and it would be well for the public if he adhered to his legitimate calling, leaving the study and preparation of medicine to the duly qualified practitioner. *Coccus indicus* appears to be an almost essential constituent in the brewing of porter, if the recipes before adverted to are followed.

In numerous instances fragments of this berry have been found among hops which have been used in brewing, and when we consider the probability that only a few of the revenue officers are acquainted with its appearance there is reason to believe only a very small percentage of the adulterations practised are actually discovered. Picric acid, the active principle of *coccus indicus*, when swallowed does not produce intoxication, but acts as a virulent poison, and a small crystal almost imperceptible to the eye is sufficient to produce a sense of suffocation, and to cause a rush of blood to the head, coldness of the extremities, and other dangerous symptoms. Tobacco is another vegetable poison employed to impart to beer a fictitious appearance of strength by increasing its intoxicating power, and as it is an article of common use there is no difficulty in obtaining any quantity for this highly dangerous and unlawful purpose. The physiological effects on man of the extract of tobacco are so well known that they scarcely need description. Every smoker can painfully remember the nausea, sickness, and sometimes purging induced by smoking before the system became used to it. Tobacco extract has a similar effect, only in a greater degree, and if taken in large quantities causes death. Unfortunately for the protection of the public health, neither chemistry nor the microscope has yet afforded much assistance in the detection of the active principle of these pernicious substances when present in beer; it follows, therefore, that if the adulterating material be not found on the premises of the brewer or retailer, the fraud can be carried on with impunity.

AN ELABORATE PIPE.—A meerschaum pipe has been manufactured in America, designed for the Paris Exhibition. The pipe itself is eleven inches in length, and the amber mouthpiece eight inches long and two inches thick. The carving on the trunk of the pipe represents the meeting of Mac-

beth and Banquo with the witches, on their way from the battle-field. The figures and horses are four inches in height. Surmounting the bowl Shakespeare is represented seated in a chair, looking down upon the scene. How much bird's-eye tobacco would it take to load this monster before it fired off?

THE HIDDEN CRIME.

CHAPTER I.

"THERE had always been one in the way, one too many. Just so in my father's time. And with it the wronged feeling that had sprung up in by-gone generations that the great estate contained in it wealth enough for two families. And every Crommelyn who died willed his will in the same way—if his heir died childless, the property was to go to the cousins.

"My father married back into the Crommelyns—the only daughter. There was but one son, and of his five children his latest born alone outlived him. He was an invalid, this Walter Crommelyn, about my own age, and unmarried. So it was no wonder I cast longing eyes towards Ashcroft. Only that frail life between me and wealth. For my father had not been a rich man, and my mother's tastes were all luxurious. She managed, too, that they should be gratified.

"With all this there had never been any family quarrels. Both branches had been much too proud for dissensions. So, when my father died, my prospects were fair enough, for I was on excellent terms with my cousin. Only that one life between. No wonder I dreamed, as my father had done before me. I married, and you were born, and then Ashcroft acquired new consequence in my eyes.

"Walter was feeble every winter, but stronger in the summers. He decided, suddenly, one autumn, to try the shores of the Mediterranean. I believe I felt disappointed that he did not ask me to accompany him. His housekeeper and but one servant were to go; this man, when occasion required, was a perfect nurse. I confess I always distrusted the housekeeper. She had been a handsome young widow when she came to Ashcroft, seven years before, and hardly looked a day older then. Latterly, however, she had taken on a new authority, and if Walter had betrayed any special fondness for her I should have suspected at once some design on her part. He was a quiet, undemonstrative man; his poor health, perhaps, rendering him more shy and retiring than he would have been under other circumstances. So we came to Ashcroft to keep it in order while he was away. This was how a still stronger feeling of proprietorship grew up in me. I felt thoroughly at home. I liked the consequence it gave me, and it seemed as if at last I had come to my true position. The neighbours considered it mine as much as if my cousin was really dead.

"I heard from Walter regularly. He was pleased with my management of the estate. I did take great pride in it, and, whatever I may have done since, I was scrupulously honest then. His health fluctuated. Occasionally the housekeeper wrote when he was too ill for such an effort. She always signed herself 'Alice Yates'; but once in a letter I remembered noticing the word 'ours' crossed out and 'your cousin's' inserted in its stead. It gave me a shock for several days.

"I cannot say that I desired Walter's death; yet when I thought of it, as was quite natural, it seemed the only step that was needed to place me in full possession of my inheritance, for I considered it rightfully mine. So I waited patiently, year after year—there were four of them, but I could have counted up a dozen cheerfully to have Ashcroft at last.

"One day a packet sealed and edged with black was handed to me by a servant. I took it to the library. I remember your mother had company in the drawing-room. You ran across the hall, a sturdy, handsome boy. I caught you in my arms and whispered, 'It is all yours now, my darling. You are the heir of Ashcroft.'

"The what?" you asked, laughing. "I looked at you with so much pride, I wanted to take you on my knee and explain it all to you, but I felt that your mother had a right to know first, so I put you off with the promise of a pony you had been teasing for, and drawing the bolt in the library door was alone with my missive. I eyed it rather curiously, for it was unusually thick, and broke the seal with trembling fingers. There were three separate parcels. The largest in Walter's fine, al-

most girlish hand, such as he used when he first went away, another, a weak, irresolute scrawl, and a third in the bold, clear style I had come to know so well. This was brief and signed, 'Alice Yates Crommelyn.'

"For several moments I hardly breathed. I looked out of the low window—a summer day it was with a golden sun glittering over lawn and meadow land and toying with the purple shadows under the trees. All these broad acres, the cottages down yonder filled with thriving workmen, this grand old house that I had counted on so confidently, swept away at a single word—there were wife and child to share it.

"When I could begin to think I took up the largest missive and perused it. Written some six months after Walter's departure, giving an account of his secret marriage that had taken place some time before he had left Ashcroft, and detailing the birth of a little daughter, then a fortnight old, a fine promising child. He had intended to acknowledge his marriage, but Alice feared it would lead to a rupture that might affect him fatally, and she was more than anxious for him to live until his child was born. So they had gone away without any explanation. Now that he had a child of his own to take Ashcroft he appointed me guardian conjointly with her mother, and begged that I would be as good a friend to her as I had been to him when he was called upon to leave her fatherless.

"His second letter was written a few days before his death, and contained many apologies for having kept his secret so long. Knowing the man, I did not wonder at it. He was the more earnest in commending his child to my care, as in the last year his wife had developed a fatal affection of the heart, pronounced incurable by the best physicians of Florence. He wished me to come for them immediately, and to see that his body was brought home for its final rest. I should find myself amply rewarded for my trouble, and, in the event of the death of his little girl, all would come to me and mine. If by any mischance she became motherless, I was to remain at Ashcroft until she attained her majority, and be as nearly father to her as was possible. I should find all legal instructions in his wife's possession. In an old desk in his rooms there was a copy of his marriage certificate and all papers of importance, save what she had. That he adored her and their child was evident, and he took a very natural pride in thinking that some one of his own was to queen it at Ashcroft. But it was gall and wormwood to me then. I felt myself wronged, outraged. Why had he placed Ashcroft in my hands at all? Why had he gone away hugging his secret and leaving me in ignorance? And that crafty, deceitful Mrs. Yates! I hated her so bitterly at the moment that I left her letter lying untouched on the table. I strode up and down the room tortured by angry passions, and feeling a strong inclination to disbelieve the whole affair.

"The bell rang for lunch. I sent word by the servant that they must excuse me—I was busy. I could face no one then. I wanted to be quite alone. Ashcroft gone at a single blow! Another life between, as there always was.

"And then I fancied the handsome housekeeper taking her place as Mrs. Crommelyn. We going back to our little cottage shorn of all our glories. It did seem unjust, for the years I had wasted here might have been turned to better account.

"My wife's disappointment was hardly less keen than my own, except that she gave up all expectations at once, while I could not wholly relinquish mine. It seemed as if something must happen to give me the place I coveted.

"I could not refuse to obey my cousin's behest. Mrs. Crommelyn's letter, when I came to read it, was as reasonable as one could expect. Indeed, she appeared to desire my friendship and assistance, and though she was comfortably settled at Florence, she begged me to hasten thither, as she was all impatience to return to Ashcroft. So I made my preparations and started immediately, for there was no wisdom in delaying the evil day.

"Whether it was her own failing health or her child's clouded future that had softened her, or, perhaps, the years of affection and patient nursing and tenderness that had been required of her—certainly she was less stately and proud than as Mrs. Yates at Ashcroft. She was quite thin, with a pale, waxen complexion, very different from the brilliant bloom and beauty that had distinguished her. The little girl, Alice, as she was called, inherited this more delicate beauty and her father's shyness. Passionately fond of her mother, she scarcely cared for or noticed anyone else. So we made no special friend-

ship, though I think under other circumstances the child would have attracted me strongly.

"Mrs. Crommelyn desired to return home in a sailing packet, it being on some accounts most convenient and requiring less change. I endeavoured at first to dissuade her, but she was not a woman to be easily turned from a whim. We had a pleasant passage for the most part. Indeed, I thought the bracing air strengthened her considerably.

"Left much to myself, my reveries were not of a comforting nature. The days to come, so different from my bright plans; the poverty, the toil that must be mine, and the certainty that Ashcroft could never be yours. I gave up in a state of sullen despair. There would always be one life between; hoping was useless. I did not even care in what estimation Mrs. Crommelyn held me. I was coldly polite. I would perform every duty scrupulously, and when they were comfortably settled leave them and carve out a new fortune for myself. I would not stay to be tempted and tortured by Ashcroft any longer.

"Better for me if I could have kept my resolves; but some fiend was on the watch for me, knowing me weak and willing to be led astray. And now came my evil hour.

"The weather had been unusually beautiful until we were nearing the familiar shore, when an autumn storm came up with sharp, sudden fury, the wind driving us hard inland. On we went in the gathering darkness, the terror-stricken captain losing his self-possession—the passengers wild with affright—the men using their best efforts, but unable to make any headway against the terrible giant who swept to the right and left in his relentless might.

"Mrs. Crommelyn was deathly pale, but cool and calm. I heard her giving Matthew some directions—he had gone out with my cousin. To my care she offered to confide some valuable papers—nay, insisted upon it.

"I am as likely to perish as anyone, I said, gloomily. I scarcely cared for life.

"No, you can swim. You and Matthew may be able to save her, when it would not be possible to care for us both."

"Yes, it was the child that was of so much importance. I almost hated it!

"Night and darkness enveloped us. The shrieks of the storm mingled with the cries of the ill-fated crew. One breaker after another swept over us, and then our brave little vessel would right herself. But when she began to leak despair filled nearly everyone. A wild, faint hope that we might be driven on some friendly shore—that was all.

"There was a sudden lurch, a crushing, creaking sound. We had struck upon a rock. It was evident the ship would part soon and be swallowed up by those fierce waves. The storm had abated somewhat, but the wind still raged terribly. Such eyes of fear glared at one another! Such prayers trembled upon death-white lips!

"The life-boats were brought out and manned. We could hear an answering gun from a not distant shore, and relief, succour was possible. If we all perished Ashcroft would be yours; if we were saved—

"The women and children were put in the first boat. In that strange scene of confusion, in the wild tumult that beset me, I tried to avoid actual wrong. I brought Mrs. Crommelyn, her child, and her maid, and placed them in Matthew's charge amongst the waiting group. I thought I saw them in safety by the light of the flickering lanterns. Then I turned to face my own fate. My duty towards them was performed.

"Another boat was filling. If they could reach the shore the whole crew might be saved. It was folly for me to throw away my chance. They were crowding in. I sprang over the rail and felt the frail little boat quiver beneath my feet. Then a wild cry transfixed me and I turned my head. In the glare of the lantern, lashed by one of the men to the broken mast, I saw Mrs. Crommelyn with Alice in her arms. Where had she come from, when I thought her safe not three minutes before?

"Take her with you," she shrieked—"my child—for her father's sake save her!"

"They were hauling in the rope. I staggered up blindly, resolved not to yield to giant temptation clutching me. I begged them to put back, to take her in my place; yet all the while I thought of you and Ashcroft.

"A strong hand crushed me down beneath its weight. A thick voice bade me 'hold my tongue.' They were rough sailors, and had waited until the very last for their chance. And then a great wave swept between. All was darkness and blankness.

"I remembered nothing more until morning. A cold, yellow light stealing through the window—the sun struggling through sullen clouds. The air was raw and chilly, the ocean still tumultuous, for I could hear the tramp of the angry waves beating upon the shore. I felt sore and strained in every limb. Lying there in that dingy little cottage, I lived over the fearful scene again, and wondered who had been saved.

"Presently I crawled out. I could endure the silence no longer. The fisherman in whose house I had found refuge pressed me to partake of his rude hospitality, but I was too anxious to eat. I questioned him impatiently.

"Two of the life-boats had reached the shore. The first had swamped with its precious freight. So, then, Mrs. Crommelyn and her child would have been lost. Several dead bodies had been driven ashore already, and part of the wreck was stranded a few miles below, upon Long Beach.

"I went out with my guide. The bleak, uncomfortable morning, the barren shore interspersed with desolate gray islands of tangled seaweed and broken shells, the strip of sandy beach and the broad treacherous ocean over beyond. I shivered with a strange terror as I viewed the scene.

"By noon they had tolerably correct news. About twenty were lost. Mrs. Crommelyn's body floated ashore. In her hand she clutched something with a mother's deathless grasp—the cloak little Alice had worn. I knew then the child was lost, and a shiver of guilt stole over me. But what more could I have done? I was not to blame for that last scene, surely! I would have saved her even then had it been possible.

"I went to London that afternoon, leaving Matthew, who had also been saved, in charge of the dead; and with instructions to watch for the two others that might drift up from their watery bed. But they never came. Walter Crommelyn and his child rested in that broad cemetery where so many have found a home. Mrs. Crommelyn was buried at Ashcroft.

"When the excitement died away a little, or, rather, when I could gain sufficient courage, with the assistance of the lawyer who had managed Walter's business, papers were looked over, and affairs put in a process of settlement. I was in no hurry. I knew well enough Ashcroft was mine. Yet it did not bring the satisfaction I once fancied it would. I could not forget that terrible night and Alice Crommelyn's imploring cry. I fancied, too, that Matthew followed me about with suspicious eyes. So restless and uncomfortable did this render me that on some slight pretext I sent him away from Ashcroft. Walter had left him some hundreds, in grateful remembrance. I was glad to have him out of my sight.

"I do not need to recall any of our after-life to you, my son. What of it that has appeared singular to you will be no mystery when you have finished this. I took much pride in being the possessor of Ashcroft at last, as you well know, yet I confess I was not happy.

"A vague phantom pursued me. If I shook it off for a few days, it was sure to waylay me at some unexpected turn. Then your mother died, and all my hopes, all my ambition centred in you. It was shortly after this, ten years from the time of the wreck, that I was surprised by a visit from Matthew. He was much aged, bore marks of dissipation and a rough life. There was a leer in his eyes that angered me.

"What he told with much circumlocution I will relate briefly. Alice Crommelyn was alive, had been miraculously saved, as it appeared, from the wreck, taken home by a fisherman, some miles below where most of the passengers had landed. His wife having recently lost a child of that age, clung to the little one, and, some way, inquiries had missed her, though we had taken the loss of Alice as an accepted fact, and made no search. At first I treated this story as a trumped-up affair, and could not believe it, though I confess it tortured me with dread. He produced proof that filled me with dismay. The fisherman's wife had in her possession the clothes Alice had worn, trinkets with her name engraved upon them, and Matthew could swear to her identity by a scar upon her temple, received by a fall that had proved well-nigh fatal. He was armed at all points.

"Then he had a proposal to make. He was a mean, low villain, and I scarcely less guilty in listening to him. He cared nothing for the child, but was in urgent want of money. If I would pay him well for his secret, he would swear never to trouble me again.

"I had the best right to Ashcroft, he thought, and since she knew nothing of her loss, and was satisfied with her life, it could make no difference. He was like some subtle fiend, and tempted me in every direction. I was weak and listened; though I would not answer him that day. Indeed, he became impatient at length, and threatened me. I was compelled to decide.

"How shall I confess my shame? I thought of you, of myself, of the intrigues of Mrs. Yates, of the weakness of Walter: and a sense of wrong wrought me up to a pitch of desperation. I bought the man's wicked silence and became his accomplice in guilt and treachery. But Ashcroft was mine—yours.

"When I could gain the courage I took a trip to the coast to satisfy myself. If I could have proved the story false, I would scarcely have grudged the money paid to Matthew, so great would have been my relief. But it was not so to be. Although I hated the place and shivered at every moan of the ocean, I staid there a week, and satisfied myself completely. The foster-parents had changed the child's name, but she was Alice Crommelyn. Her face would have attested that. A beautiful young girl, in spite of her coarse, hard life.

"I half expected Matthew would return. Either his money lasted longer than I thought for, or he had a remnant of honour. I almost wanted him to come. I resolved that Alice should be restored to her rightful station. I grew gloomy and morose, pondering the subject, made myself uncongenial to you, knowing you must despise me when the truth was told. And in this state of wretched indecision I waited year after year, until four had dragged out their wearisome length. Then Matthew made his appearance.

"You were enjoying your wealth and position innocently enough, unconscious of any stain. How could I tell you? How could I bring you down to the depths of poverty and shame? So I yielded weakly again. Then the man was master and I slave. He became a torment, a curse. For the last twelve months I have lived in perpetual fear. You know now why I wanted you away, why I preferred silence and loneliness, why I grew old and fitful of temper.

"At last the blow must be given. The man has grown intolerable, and my guilt too heavy for me to bear. I have no one but you. How well I loved you you can guess from my sin, yet you will hate and despise me for it. I cannot complain, I deserve all your reproaches. Pride and ambition have been my ruin, but now I am humbled to the very dust. I will not even ask you to forgive me. But I know you too well to think you will hesitate to assist me in making restitution. The guilty secret has worn me to the verge of the grave. You could not endure it—you would not.

"Will you search for your cousin, then, that she may be restored to her rightful possessions? I dare not trust Matthew. He does not want her to return, for with that his reign is ended. And when I am dead pity me a little. Your guilty and unhappy father,
HORACE ROTHWAY."

CHAPTER II.

It was after midnight when Selwyn Rothway finished reading this letter of his father's. An August night with no moon, a brooding stillness in all the air, the very insects chirping drowsily, their monotonous hum dying out now and then. For all the warmth he shivered. He arose and fastened the blinds, he paced the floor softly so that he might disturb no one. All of life changed to him.

If this secret had been told a month ago—ah, why not five years ago? Then his father would have been innocent of the foul stain. So sternly upright was he that the very thought filled him with loathing. His own father.

Yes, the mystery was all explained. The change that he had always ascribed to his mother's death, the grief that had bowed his father prematurely—whitened his hair, wrinkled his brow, changed his whole demeanour. A sense of guilt and shame that he had carried about with him a phantom dogging every step.

For the last year he had fancied his absence a relief to his father. There would always be joy at his coming, to be sure, but immediately some new pleasure would be planned. The love and pride of his mother's time slowly changing into coldness. Not that his father ever grudged him any luxury; indeed, he supplied every want lavishly. But servant after servant had disappeared from Ashcroft, apartments had been closed, and now only three or four were in general use. The place took on a gloomy air. So

It was no wonder that at twenty-six, and having never known a restriction, Selwyn willingly sought his pleasure abroad. Not that he was selfish or indifferent. Often he would have been glad to stay and alleviate his father's despondency.

This summer had been spent mostly at Scarborough, an aristocratic little town, never disturbed by the hum of manufactories. Shady streets, beautiful with vistas of garden and lawn, picturesque houses, clumps of wood, and far reaches of meadow land and grain-fields. Then the broad, placid river, flowing in a stately fashion, dotted with slow-going sloops or dainty pleasure-boats, and made musical night and morning by the song of fishermen going up and down.

Far off, the green land dying out, and a faint suggestion of the ocean, a hazy outline of sea and sky. He liked the quiet and air of ease, the sense of comfort that pervaded everything.

Scarborough held another attraction for him, too. It must be confessed. He had come down first in a fit of idleness, partly to please a friend, and after meeting Miss Orne experienced a strong inclination to stay. Brighton had grown wearisome to him. The same routine year after year, the same rides and walks. Scarborough had a freshness, sleepy as it was. So he had sent for his horses, and installed himself quite to his liking at the hotel that was never overcrowded.

Eleanor Orne was one of those wonderful women on whom nature bestows her most subtle charm. Not beautiful according to any rule, capricious, versatile, with a cycle of moods which were all unlike, a temperament that contradicted itself at every turn, a temper varying, changing from warmth to coldness with the ease of an April wind. A born coquette, fond of power, using every caution to gain her point, but never satisfied with any conquest. A woman who made herself necessary to you, and then discovered that you were not necessary to her.

Selwyn Rothsay began to study her first out of curiosity, with a half fancy that he should never thoroughly like her. They had piquant little talks, dashed with rare bits of philosophy; they disputed until politeness only kept them from quarrelling. They rode together, she daring him to any venture. The sense of superiority she assumed urged him into an eager contest.

Such women invariably win. Withal she had a rare patience, when she undertook any point dear to her heart. To have one humble her was what she could not endure, and though half the world might bow at her feet, one Mordecai at the gate would have made her miserable. When she became sufficiently interested in Mr. Rothsay to desire his whole approbation she determined he should love her. She studied him closely. When she could not lure him into warmth she piqued him into it; and this was often done after some little difference. Then she could be so royally charming when she pleased.

Neither of them thought of marriage in the beginning. It was merely one of those interesting acquaintances that absorb the faculties without touching the heart. But as weeks wore on she, having had the wider experience, was the best tactician; then I think she had the coolest brain.

Unknown either to herself or to Mr. Rothsay, she had a powerful rival—a woman she would have smiled over, and dismissed with a supercilious nod—Faith Armytage, cool and fair, with soft gray eyes, brown hair that was hardly light nor dark, but smooth and shining like satin. A lithe, graceful figure, a manner that never jarred upon you or betrayed any sharp points. Yet the mouth and chin gave you a sort of index to her character. A subtle strength, honour and candour, without the slightest hint of hardness. But for that you would have decided she was too gentle and pliable.

They were staying at the hotel, she and her aunt, a pale, quiet invalid. That their means were limited he guessed from the first, and being kindly hearted, Mr. Rothsay had bestowed upon them many little favours in that graceful manner that leaves no sense of obligation.

Faith accepted his attentions in the same manner they were offered, gratefully, yet with a certain pride, it must be confessed, for her aunt's sake, she said daily with her eyes.

He frequently took Mrs. Armytage for a drive. There was but one seat in his dainty turn-out. Once or twice he had asked Faith, but she had murmured some excuse and he has not been particularly anxious. She had seen him with Miss Orne, and in a girl's way of jumping at conclusions had settled their romance. It gave her a little pang.

It was odd, but whenever Mr. Rothsay had been particularly fretted by Miss Orne he made up for it by a long talk with Miss Armytage. Eleanor never imagined from what source he drew his secret resistance; yet as she came to understand that there was some source of strength unknown to her she put forth greater energies. And it was then she made her conquest.

She had kept most of her lovers in a state of incertitude until their patience became exhausted, but this man was resolute, not wholly blinded by his infatuation. He would have an answer to his liking. And so she was forced to promise, to yield up some of her sweetness. From this feast Selwyn Rothsay had returned, every energy flagging and his brain steeped in delicious dreams, to find this packet on his table and read the strange confession I have given you.

He went on pacing the room in a tumult of thought. More than once he felt inclined to believe the whole thing a fiction, the wild dream of a disordered brain. But reason substantiated it by too many facts. Nothing else could so well account for the life his father had led during the last five years.

And yet, he was his father. Whatever of humiliation came they must share it together. The sin had been committed for him, and though innocent of any guilt he must bear it as well. There had always been a strange love between this father and son. But to be reduced in one hour from affluence to positive want, to feel that he had gained so much under a false pretence! To give up Eleanor, whom he had just won, for he knew it must come to that. She was no woman for adversity. This did not detract from her in his estimation just then. He would have been as loth to drag her from her position and life of luxury as she would be to come. If he could have known he would not have spoken before.

What was he to do? He had not solved the question at sunrise. His heart told him that his first duty was to his father. He fought down hard and evil thoughts, he tried to uproot all bitterness, but it was not an easy matter. Still, he was too truly generous to add to his father's pangs of remorse. And having no right to Ashcroft, it was best to give it up as soon as possible.

The room was growing close and unendurable. He seized his hat and started out. Only the servants were astir. The quiet old town had not roused from its slumber, so he could walk off his torturing restlessness unnoticed. What days he had spent here! In fact, how delightful his whole life had been! Then he thought of the girl who had grown up in a fisher's cottage, who was leading a coarse, toilsome existence. Young and fair his father had said. What if she was contented—what if she had married in her own sphere and had no desires beyond?

That would not excuse him from so clear a duty. When he knowingly wronged her he himself was at fault.

So he rambled on, trying to unravel this tangled web, until the sun lay soft and clear over the far river. Then he turned to retrace his steps. In one of the fragrant paths he came upon Miss Armytage.

The sweet face, so fresh and fair, the tender eyes, the smooth, calm brow, impressed him strongly this morning. Perhaps, weakened by his severe mental struggle, he felt more the need of a friend. Hereyes would be so clear.

They passed a friendly greeting. She looked surprised at this encountering him, and presently said: "I did not know early walking was one of your specialities."

"It is not." She noticed then how haggard his face looked, how the lips were compressed and the eyes absent, as if fixed upon some unseen object. What was it—Miss Orne? He did not have the appearance of a happy or fortunate lover. Still their acquaintance hardly warranted any questions, so she was silent.

He wondered at that moment which came the nearest to love, the high regard and admiration he felt for Miss Armytage, or his blind, bewildering passion for Miss Orne. Away from the latter he could reason so calmly, with her he could think of nothing.

They came in sight of the hotel. "I shall leave immediately after breakfast," he said. "Will you hope, in the fashion that some people pray, that I may have strength to be just in every particular?"

Mr. Rothsay wrote a brief note to Miss Orne, gave his man all necessary orders about packing, and caught the train at eight. Just at dusk he came upon Ashcroft. How could he meet his

father? All day he had been racked by such cruel thoughts.

A strange quiet pervaded the house. It chilled him on the very threshold. The housekeeper came to meet him. In a husky, half-repressed tone, he uttered:

"My father?"
"He's very poorly indeed."
"How long has he been ill?" Selwyn asked, in quick alarm.

"He has scarcely left his room for a fortnight, though he's been ailing all the summer."

"Why was I not sent for?" he demanded, sternly.

"I'm sure I don't know. Matthew said your father kept writing to you all the time."

So he had, but never expressing the slightest wish for his son's return. And this villain Matthew was here!

Selwyn gave a brief attention to his disordered dress, and, though weary with fatigue and excitement, followed quick upon the housekeeper's announcement of him. In the gathering gloom of the apartment he saw the figure of a man gliding out of the door.

They clasped each other's hands in silence, the father and the son. All sense of wrong and anger melted away.

"If you had sent before!"

Selwyn's voice was low, and if it contained reproach it was the tender reproach of affection.

"I meant to wait until I died. I thought I should. I was afraid to see your face. I have brought shame and misery upon you."

It was true, but Selwyn Rothsay did not think of himself at that moment.

"It is not too late for reparation, thank heaven."

"You will find her, then?"

"Yes. I will restore to the utmost."

"And you?"

"I am young and strong, with many resources. Do not fear for me."

That night the father and son came to a true understanding.

By morning Mr. Rothsay was better, stronger, though his son read too surely that his days were numbered. His one thought now was reparation. Drawing so near to eternity he saw his sin in its true light.

Selwyn would fain have staid, but no person could be found immediately to undertake the search for Alice Crommelyn. Matthew had disappeared. So with a heavy heart the young man started, for the first part of his journey was simple enough. His father could direct him, and after learning the facts he could return home.

Yet when he reached the place some difficulties arose. The fisher's wife was dead, the old man strayed off now and then on a cruise, and the impression was that he was away now. By dint of persevering inquiry Selwyn found him in a neighbouring town, but in a state of half-drunken imbecility. It was some time before he could make him understand what he wanted.

He remembered after awhile. The child's name was Alice, but his wife had called her Faith, after their own dead little one. Some great lady wanted her and had taken her away, but she had come back when his wife was dying. He had forgotten the name, but there was a letter somewhere from Faith; she wrote to him occasionally.

How oddly familiar the name sounded, and his mind reverted to Faith Armytage. If—but what a foolish thought.

Through the search the old fisherman repeated the story of the wreck and the finding of Alice. Every particular corroborated his father's description. There could not be the slightest doubt concerning her identity. And she had taken with her trinkets found upon her, marked in her name.

The letter was found at length. Crumpled and soiled, with a strong odour of tobacco, the usual perfume of its receptacle. Selwyn Rothsay glanced at the signature, and was for a moment breathless. There it was:

"Faith Armytage!"

He took the news back to his father. Alice would never shame this great mansion, if for years she had lived in a fisherman's rude home. What a pleasure all this beauty would be to her!

He translated the unspoken want in his father's eyes. If he could see the child he had so wronged—at first unwittingly. If she could know how truly he repented.

Selwyn Rothsay returned to the quaint old town Ten days only since he had left it.

CHAPTER III.

AFTER the awkwardness of Alice Crommelyn's first introduction at Ashcroft had worn off her natural tact and sweetness displayed itself. The poor, penitent old man needing her care and love touched her sympathetic heart. She cherished no bitter feelings, no angry resentment. I am not quite sure but that she would willingly have given up all for her cousin's sake.

The explanations on both sides had been given. Alice still retained the necklace and ruby cross her uncle remembered so well that she had worn when picked up by the fisherman. And when they came to see her at Ashcroft many points of resemblance were traced to her father's family. Yet she had a sweetness they lacked, a beguiling tenderness that won the old man's heart, and made him repent daily of the sin into which he had been betrayed.

Mrs. Armytage had been attracted by this grace and delicacy. She had rescued Alice at the most important period of her life, and though she could not afford her any remarkable advantages, had made her something more than a companion, a child and friend. Her naturally fine mind had expanded under this culture, and her affections had been brought into exercise by the fond care and interest.

Mr. Rothsay lingered day after day; a latent happiness shining in his eyes and hovering about the pale lips. What a delightful life he might have had with this fair girl! And if Selwyn—no, it was not to be thought of now—but in his ambition he had over-reached himself and ruined his son. That was the amount of his work. But it was blessed to die in peace at last, with Alice bending over him and this kind son who had never for an instant allowed him to regret his confession.

So the light went out quietly, floated off on the broad river to anchor in another country.

Selwyn sorrowed truly. Alice had grown much attached to her uncle in these three weeks, with that clinging sense one experiences towards the helpless and suffering. Mrs. Armytage had come at Selwyn's request. What of sin there was in Mr. Rothsay's confession was to be held sacred between him and Alice. She had a sort of pride about it, and not even to her dear friend and aunt, as she still called her, did she breathe that part.

Horace Rothsay was buried in the family vault. How often in the annals of the Crommelyns two cousins had returned from a funeral just as these two. Was either haunted with the sense of being one too many? If so, it was not Selwyn.

Alice Crommelyn's fortune had brought her happiness. And Selwyn Rothsay gained more than he had lost. A. M. D.

A LANDOWNER at Zug, in Switzerland, has recently been convicted of putting water in his milk, and has been condemned to eighteen months' imprisonment, the loss of civil rights, and costs.

A DARING FEAT.—An extraordinary act of foolhardiness was perpetrated a short time since at Bordeaux. A young man, aged about twenty, dressed as a sailor, ascended to the lower gallery of the tower of Pey-Berland, and finding that he could mount no higher, the internal communication with the upper gallery being closed, got outside and clambered by the projections and apertures up to the statue of the Virgin on the top, finally seating himself on the head of the figure, where he remained for a considerable time, dangling his legs and smoking cigars. A crowd naturally collected below and became denser every moment. At length the young man descended to the lower gallery by the means mentioned above, and being there informed that police officers were coming in quest of him, again got out upon the cornice, and making a sudden spring, caught the lightning conductor, and following its windings, descended, till a final jump enabled him to reach terra firma without injury. He then ran down a bye street and disappeared.

FANCY DRESS BALL ON THE ICE.—On the 14th ult. the Quebec Skating Club had their grand fancy dress ball at their ice rink. The bugle sounded at nine o'clock, and the motley crowd of skaters rushed on the ice, over which they dashed in high glee, their spirits stirred to the utmost by the enlivening music and the cheering presence of hundreds of ladies and gentlemen, including the *élite* of Quebec. Over the glittering floor sped dozens of flying figures, circling, skimming, whirling, and intermingling with a new swiftness, the bright and varied colours, the rich and grotesque costumes succeeding each other, or combining with bewildering rapidity and effect. The gentlemen, in addition to the usual characters, introduced some novelties—an owl, a monkey, a

monster bottle, a tailor at work on his bench, a boy on horseback, all capital representations, and by good skaters. Among the suits of the ladies were representations of "Night" and "Morning," a *viandière*, a habitant's wife, and other characters that appeared to advantage. The skaters presented both a varied and brilliant appearance, their parts being well sustained as to costume and deportment, and their movements on the ice being characterized by that grace and skill of movement bred of long practice. The dances included quadrilles, waltzes, and galops, lancers, and so forth, for which there was suitable music from first to last.

OLIVER DARVEL.

CHAPTER LII.

WHILE these plans were silently maturing the priest had a key made from the wax impression given him by the Electress, and thus she was enabled to furnish him with ample proof of the truth of her assertions. With his assistance she mastered the cipher in which Lady Ilmena's letters were written, and found in them the confirmation of her darkest fears.

She was to be sacrificed, and the Countess of Ildestein installed in her place; and her rival seemed so impatient to obtain the position she coveted that the Electress and her adviser saw that, if she were to be saved, no time must be lost in effecting the *coup d'état* which would rescue her from the peril in which she stood.

A rumour that the Princess Irene was still living was circulated among the people, and it was further said that it was the intention of her friends to bring her forward, marry her to the eldest son of the usurper, and place them jointly under the care of Albert's mother, aided by a clergyman, whose name, for the present, was studiously withheld.

Every evil deed committed by the present Elector became the subject of mysterious gossip, and his wife's wrongs were the common talk of the people; though as yet the prince had no suspicion that his popularity was rapidly waning. In a few brief weeks his reputation sank suddenly in the estimation of every honest man, and the deepest sympathy was aroused in favour of his wife.

Lichtenfels was a Catholic principality, and the numerous priests possessed more influence than any other order, wielded as it was over all classes, and appealing to their consciences in the name of a higher power than any known upon earth.

Before the Elector suspected his danger the very earth was crumbling beneath his feet, and while he was watching an opportunity to deal a death-blow to his wife she had almost succeeded in snatching from him the greatness he had committed so many crimes to attain.

But for a fatal accident, which plunged them both into the direst affliction, the conspiracy would have been carried into effect, the Elector deposed, and his son proclaimed as his successor.

During the weeks which had passed away while these events were in progress the Countess of Ildestein had returned from her foreign tour, and appeared at Lichtenfels. She was received with distinguished honour, and the Elector scarcely made an effort to disguise from his wife that he was completely enthralled by her beauty and fascinations.

The princess examined her rival with a desire to discover in what way she excelled herself. She saw a tall, dark woman of twenty-five, with large, Oriental eyes, in which slumbered depths of passion and ambition unknown to women of a colder race. Her supple figure was replete with grace, and on her full, red lips dwelt a power of persuasion possessed by few of her sex.

Beautiful and soft as those languishing orbs were, there was, at times, a cruel gleam in them, and their most sinister gaze often rested upon the young sons of her lover, as if she were speculating on the chances of ridding herself of them in the brilliant future to which she looked forward.

As to the hapless wife, she knew that she would soon be removed from her path, so she took no trouble about her, but exerted all her powers of fascination to blind her to the treacherous game she was playing.

Upon the mother's side the Lady of Ildestein was of Italian lineage; she claimed descent from the detested Borgias, and in her was embodied all the heartlessness of that unscrupulous race.

She had met Prince Ernest of Berchtols in her early youth, and conceived for him one of those

violent passions only known to such ardent Southern blood as hers. He was then on the eve of marriage with Lady Gertrude Guilderstein, and she was so portionless that she knew any attempt to win him from his betrothed would be fruitless.

So she subdued her hopeless passion, sought his friendship, and at the first opportunity established the correspondence which had since been constantly maintained.

In her heart she vowed that he should yet be hers, and it seemed as if fortune aided her in carrying out her designs. Her uncle, the Lord of Ildestein, lost his only son, and dying himself of a broken heart, she inherited his property. A few months later a cousin of her mother's bequeathed her a fortune. He was a South American planter and slave-owner, and business connected with the settlement of his estate had lately taken her to Italy.

But before that time she had taken up her abode in Lichtenfels, and, during Prince Ernest's visits there, while his uncle lived, she used her opportunities so well as to awaken in his selfish heart the passion she so ardently wished to inspire.

These plans were concerted, and everything seemed tending to their speedy consummation, at the very time the wife became acquainted with them, and took her own means to thwart them.

A series of brilliant entertainments were given by the friends of the Lady Ildestein, in honour of her return to Lichtenfels, and the last of them was a picnic on a magnificent scale, ordered by the Elector, at the especial request of his fair friend.

The weather was charming, and the aristocratic company invited to attend were to assemble in a park, a few miles from the town, in which a deep and narrow stream flowed. On this stream a regatta was to take place, and the contending oarsmen were to appear in the colours of the Elector and those of the Countess of Ildestein.

It was arranged beforehand that, in compliment to Lady Ilmena, her partisans were to be permitted to claim the victory, and it was openly whispered among the friends of the countess, that a divorce would soon be obtained from Rome, and the Elector, freed from his wife, would bestow his hand where it was evident his heart was already given.

Father Joseph and his coadjutors made a dextrous use of Prince Ernest's palpable devotion to his inamorata to influence the masses of the people against their ruler, and few were ignorant that the Electress was a most unhappy and neglected wife.

The picnic happened opportunely for them, and it was arranged that just before the breaking up of the party the blow should be struck which, it was fondly hoped, would leave the Elector at the mercy of his injured and insulted wife, and finally restore the true heiress to her inheritance.

How the latter portion of the programme was to be managed the conspirators left for after consideration. The Electress positively asserted her belief that the heiress was yet living; but where she was to be found was as yet a profound mystery.

The change of rulers once effected, the reins of power in her hands, she would trust to future contingencies to enable her to recover some clue to the lost heiress; or, if that were impossible, to induce the people to accept her son in the Princess Irene's place.

A manifesto was drawn up, setting forth the crimes and misdemeanours of the man they intended to depose, and everything was in readiness for the blow they meant to strike.

In the meantime no intimation of danger seemed to have reached the Elector or his personal friends. He went to the festival in the gayest spirits, fearing nothing, dreading no decline in the popularity he had so lately enjoyed among his people. He felt no apprehension on the score of his wife's jealousy, for her passive endurance of his devotion to her rival had completely deceived him.

It was now comparatively easy for the Electress to bear her part in the drama she had so cleverly arranged; for in her heart had perished the last tender or remorseful feeling towards the man she had once so passionately loved; and in its place had arisen a cold and resolute determination to mete unto him the fate he had planned for herself.

He, in his turn, should have the benefit of the drug he had been instrumental in giving her; and only when he grovelled like a slave at her feet, then, and not till then, would she accord him forgiveness for the enormous wrongs he had inflicted upon her. With scornful severity she admitted to herself that he had made her harsh by turning all the gentle

and womanly instincts of her nature to gall and bitterness, and he should reap his reward in finding that they overflowed upon his devoted head. He had sown the seed, and he might reap the produce.

With such thoughts and feelings she made her toilet for the occasion. She still wore black for her cousin, but on this day she chose a purple silk dress with white trimmings, a signal to her partisans that the hour for action was rapidly approaching.

The children were both to be present at this *fête*, and Father Joseph had pledged himself to bring Albert forward at the same moment in which a chosen band of his adherents seized on the Elector and bore him away to the strong fortress in which he was to be held as a prisoner.

The gay and brilliant party met in a temporary pavilion erected in a tent not far removed from the borders of the stream on which the regatta was to take place. All the art of a tasteful florist had been exhausted in adorning this sylvan temple, which externally resembled a pyramid of flowers and evergreens so skillfully interwoven as to produce the finest effect.

Within it statuary and pictures were placed in the most advantageous positions, and interspersed among them were luxurious couches to repose on when wearied with wandering through the umbrageous paths which intersected each other.

Nothing was wanting to the perfect enjoyment of the hour but hearts attuned to the serene beauty of the day and the sylvan loveliness of the scene.

At the upper end of the pavilion a dais had been erected, over which a Persian carpet was laid. On this were placed two *fountainels*, and above them flags were twined bearing the arms of the Elector and those of Ildenstein, so daring and so open was he in proclaiming to the little world around him the purpose that was in his heart.

Brilliant with animation, and tastefully attired for the occasion, the countess stood awaiting the moment in which her lover would advance and lead her to the seat which she knew had been prepared for her. It was understood that she was to be queen of the *fête*, and this significant preference shown her over her wife was but a premonition of the state to which she would soon be elevated.

Yet, amid her elation, a shrewd observer might have seen that Lady Ilmena was tremulous with nervous excitement; that her black eyes kindled at moments with vindictive malice, as if some deeper purpose lay within her beneath the shallow triumph over a neglected and outraged wife.

On this day the Electress assumed a more reckless gaiety than usually distinguished her conduct in public. She jested with her rival, and seemed to be on the best terms with her; together they approached the dais, and the Electress lifted a wreath which rested on the extended arm of a marble statue, and laughingly said:

"See, how accommodating I am to my liege lord. To you, fair queen of hearts, he owes to-day the homage of a loyal knight; and I show him how superior I am to the mean passion of jealousy by placing in his hands the flowery crown prepared for your ebony locks."

Suiting the action to the word, she laid the wreath within her husband's hand, and, with a smile of childish admiration, saw him lift it to the graceful head which bent to receive it.

Then, without a glance towards his wife, the Elector took the fair hand of the countess, and stepping upon the dais, seated her beside himself, and gaily called on all present to offer homage to the queen of the day.

The Electress was the first to approach, and the whispers of the courtiers were hushed to observe her enduring (this public insult). They saw the same smiling face she had taught herself to wear, and more than one thought:

"Why should sympathy be wasted on a woman who seems incapable of understanding that she is wronged in the most vital point that can touch the heart of a wife?"

Knee after knee was bent in that homage which was soon to become real, while exquisite music from concealed performers filled the air with their melody.

A Zingari then appeared, dressed in the fantastic costume of the East, and performed several fancy dances with such skill as to elicit universal applause.

While this went on Lady Ilmena openly flirted with her lover, and his wife looked on with that vacant expression of mirth which had almost become stereotyped upon her face. If one of the players before her could only have seen what it masked, how he would have trembled and raged by turns at

the fury he had himself evoked. The other one was an acute and accomplished woman; she did understand something of the by-play, and exulted in the belief that she held in her hand the power to crush her rival at one fell blow.

A magnificent collation was served to the sound of music, and at the head of the board sat the Countess of Ildenstein, while the Electress took a seat below her without betraying any feeling of the indignity.

She laughed and talked a great quantity of nonsense to support the part she knew she must not fall in on this day, though she was internally raging with resentment and mortification at the triumph of her rival, temporary as she believed it would be.

Father Joseph came, bringing with him the two children, one of whom was designed to play so important a part before the day closed. Albert seemed less heavy and insensible to what was passing around him than usual, and his fond mother flattered herself that his dormant mind was slowly awakening from the torpor which had hitherto bound his faculties. But he ate as greedily as ever, and when the banquet was over seemed disposed to coil himself up on one of the seats and sink to repose.

But Carl would not allow him to do this. He insisted that his brother must come with him and witness the regatta; and, followed by an officer in Father Joseph's employ who had pledged himself not to lose sight of them, the two boys went together to one of the numerous bowers which had been erected on the banks of the stream to shelter the company from the too ardent rays of the sun.

The priest had unbounded confidence in the man to whom this important charge was entrusted. Captain Jacobi was fully aware how vital it was to the conspirators that at the right moment Albert should be forthcoming; yet he seemed singularly reckless of what might happen to him. He sat down soon after reaching the bower which had been designated as the one in which the young prince would be sought when his appearance was needed, and apparently fell into a sound sleep.

With that inherent proclivity for mischief which distinguishes active children, Carl soon became discontented with a view of the river obtained from the rather isolated spot to which he had been removed. Always the leader, he suggested to his brother that a better place could easily be found on the banks of the stream, and as their temporary guardian seemed overcome with wine and sleep, they could do as they pleased.

Albert always followed his brother's advice, and he at once submitted to be led towards the water's edge at a point from which the rival boats could be seen in the distance, the sneaky rowers bending to their oars, while loud vivas rent the air.

The spot on which the children stood was as dangerous a one as could have been selected. It was a sharp angle of turf below which the action of the water had undermined the earth, and even the light weight of their two small figures seemed to make it tremble as if ready to topple into the swift current below.

The boats were half a mile distant, and if an accident occurred there was little chance that anyone could reach the children in time to save them from drowning.

Eager and excited, Carl drew his brother to the very brink and cried out:

"See, see, Alby! The men of Lichtenfels gain on the others. Hurrah! we shall win!"

Albert looked sleepily in the direction of the animated scene the stream presented below them; and after a pause Carl said, in a less exultant tone:

"Shame! shame! see how our people lag behind. How their strong arms seem to fail, while the boars of Ildenstein shoot ahead. We shall surely be beaten, and what will mamma say? I know she does not love the Lady Ilmena, for I have seen her frown and bite her lip when she was named before her."

A wild shout was wafted on the wind, for at that instant the prow of the Countess of Ildenstein's boat touched the winning-point, and the vivas seemed to rend the welkin; but a wild and sadder cry went up with them.

The guardian of the children, apparently aroused to a perception of their danger, rushed suddenly from the alcove and hastened towards the river, ostensibly to grasp his charges and withdraw them from the perilous position in which they stood; but his course was such as to precipitate in place of retarding the catastrophe. He did not cry out to warn the lads of their danger, but strode forward and placed one foot upon the earth already vibrating beneath their weight.

With a cry of alarm he suddenly threw himself back with all his force, falling upon the ground, while the tongue of land on which the young princes stood crumbled away beneath them, and both fell into the turbid stream that chafed and roared below.

After several efforts to draw himself farther from the treacherous bluff on which he had thrown himself, Jacobi succeeded in regaining his feet and giving the alarm. All eyes had been fixed on the contending boats, and until he cried out that the princes had fallen into the stream no one was aware of the accident that had happened.

By this time the two little forms, clinging desperately to each other, had arisen to the surface of the water and snuk from sight. Again and yet once again they appeared, but before assistance came they had both sunk to rise no more.

In vain did strong swimmers hasten to their rescue—divers went down in the hope of finding them in time to resuscitate the feeble spark of life that might yet remain; but the rapid current bore the hapless children swiftly away, and, exhausted by their vain efforts, the men, one by one, dejectedly returned to the shore.

While this was happening the Electress and Father Joseph stood together in the deserted pavilion, in the rear of which a band of armed followers was concealed. At a given signal they were to seize on the Elector and bear him away, while another detachment, stationed in another part of the grove, gained the bower to which the young princes had been sent, and secured them both.

The priest spoke in suppressed tones:

"I hear the cries of the victors, your highness, and the Elector will soon be returning with his courtiers around him. As he approaches the entrance to this temple, which has been appointed for your humiliation, I will give the signal that will avenge you. In ten minutes more your husband will be at your mercy."

Her lip curled and her eyes flashed with triumph, but suddenly she became deathly pale, and wildly cried:

"What is that wall? Hark! there is a cry of danger in which I hear the names of my children! Oh, mercy! if any evil should have happened to them I shall never survive it."

"Calm yourself, my dear lady; the young princes are safe, for I placed them in charge of one of our most devoted adherents, with stringent injunctions to keep them constantly in his sight till those came who were to claim possession of them."

The cries increased; they drew near the pavilion, and Father Joseph hastened to the entrance to learn their meaning; but the hapless mother stood as if frozen into stone by the fearful conviction that arose to her mind.

Her husband, wild with anguish and horror, suddenly stood before her; he exclaimed, regardless of the shock he was about to inflict:

"They are gone—they are lost! Both—both whelmed in the rushing waters, and we are childless!"

"Gone!" she repeated, in a shrill whisper.

"What—what has happened to them? Speak—what have you done with my boys, Ernest? Were they also in her way that they must be removed? My children! where are my children?" And her voice gradually arose until it became a shriek of such piercing anguish as thrilled every heart around her with terror.

Father Joseph came back white and trembling. One glance at his face sufficed; the mother, comprehending in the look he gave that all was lost, uttered a wailing cry and sank senseless upon the floor.

In a few moments the news was borne to the concealed men that the young princes had been lost in the river, and their mother lay in a fainting fit that resembled death itself. After so unexpected a catastrophe as that nothing could be done, and they wisely dispersed, each one thinking of his own safety, and devoutly hoping that no intimation of their purpose had reached the Elector.

When Father Joseph spoke to their leader he found the grove deserted, and in deep depression of spirits he followed the *cortège* which bore back the Electress to her desolate palace.

All that night she passed from one fainting fit into another, and strong doubts were felt as to her recovery from the awful bereavement she had sustained.

The prince, overwhelmed by the suddenness of the blow, was in his cabinet, and with him was Lady Ilmena, giving such consolation as she so well knew

how to give, and imparting to him the information of the conspiracy which had only been baffled by this fatal event.

As the Elector listened his grief became quenched in astonishment and rage. Had he really stood so nearly on the brink of destruction, brought there by the woman on whom he had so long and so contemptuously trampled?

He refused to credit it till such proofs were laid before him as left him no choice but belief.

The countess held in her hands all the ramifications of the plot, from which she assured him he would at the last moment have been rescued, even if the tragic fate of the children had not prevented it. She hypocritically went on:

"Thus you see, my dearest friend, that even an affliction so overwhelming as this has been to you but a blessing in disguise. Of what small consequence were those immature lives when placed in comparison with your own? But your own sun once set it would have arisen no more. Your false wife would have secured her own safety by sacrificing you, as soon as you were absolutely in her power."

"Yes—I see—I comprehend it," he replied, "and her base conduct affords me the opportunity I have long coveted—to rid myself of her for ever. I will have her tried for this crime, and leave her judges no choice but to pronounce a capital sentence upon her."

The cruel eyes gleamed, but the red lips softly said:

"I believe that fate will deal with her before the law will have a chance to pronounce her doom. The doctors say that she lies in great danger—that the loss of her children has broken her heart."

"So much the better" was the savage response. "I can give my sons up, though I was proud and fond of them, since they have been made the instruments of punishment to that faithless woman."

He spoke as bitterly as if he had a right to claim loyalty or affection from his unhappy wife. While he listened to the insidious consolations offered him by this fair Circe the Electress lay between life and death.

For many hours it was doubtful which would conquer, but she at last sank into a heavy and tranquil sleep, from which her medical attendants hoped the best results.

The stream was dragged for the lost children, and in a sudden bend, several miles below the point at which they fell in, both were found, clinging closely together, even in death.

A mournful procession bore them back to the palace, and the stark forms, robbed for the tomb, were laid in state, while every heart except one lamented their untimely fate.

The Lady of Ildestein came with veiled face, but exulting heart, to look upon the young victims of her hate—to lay her hand upon their marble flesh, and assure herself that they would never again arise between herself and the brilliant destiny that lay before her.

She then returned to her own home to find Jacobi awaiting an interview with her. He seemed subdued and half regretful that his treachery had been consummated, but Lady Ilmena had no such feeling. She exulted in the success of her counter-plot, and giving him her hand, she cried out:

"Away with grave looks on this most triumphant day of my life! I have played my game and won it, and you shall share the brilliant fortune you have aided me to secure. The service you rendered both to the Elector and myself is inestimable, and when I am his wife you may name your own reward. In the meantime here is gold. In this drawer you will find double the sum agreed upon, for you performed your business so thoroughly that you really merit a great compensation."

He glanced at the money, and with a bitter smile said:

"Ah, countess, it has been dearly won. The white faces of those little creatures will long rise before me with the reproachful look due to their murderer. I might have saved one of them, but the certainty of the Elector's danger if a rallying-point were left for his wife's friends assured me that your view of the case was correct. To save the father it was necessary to sacrifice the children. The conspiracy of which I have kept you informed has been utterly broken up by this event, and the Elector can now secure the favour of the clergy if he will leniently overlook the part they have proved themselves so ready to take against him."

"I fully understand that. I intend that hereafter my counsels shall rule in this state. The Elector has neglected the church party, but from this time

that error shall be corrected. I shall not grieve for the sacrifice of the children, for if they had escaped we know not what might have been the result. Console yourself, Jacobi, with the thought that you have performed a most important service to the state. You may also feel assured that I will not fail to evince a just appreciation of the important service you have rendered me."

"I believe the last, Lady Ilmena, and with that shadow of what I once dared to hope for I must content myself," was the dejected reply. "The love you have passed over as unworthy of acceptance has made me a traitor to the cause I was first induced to espouse, through a feeling of bitter resentment towards the man who had so long stood in my way. But when the time for action approached I could not place myself in opposition to you, who have been the angel and the demon of my life. A few smiles and gentle words again drew me to your feet, and I betrayed all—all; but believe me, it was not for the paltry gold which my necessities compel me to accept. No, no; it was the fatal necessity which forced me to bow before your lightest mandate that made me a traitor to those who had trusted me—not the greed of gain."

With a soft smile the countess offered him her hand and gently said:

"Faithful and true you have ever been to me, Jacobi, and I have good cause to know you as my best friend. As such I will reward you with what is of more worth than gold. You shall have power and station, trust to me for that."

He deeply shook his head. "I ask nothing from the hand of the man who will now soon claim you as his bride. I clearly see to what these events tend, and I shall leave Lichtenfels without unnecessary delay. Neither will it be safe for me to linger here when it is discovered that I have played the traitor's part, and was even hard-hearted enough to lay the foundation of your future greatness by the sacrifice of those innocents. I shall leave for Italy to-morrow, Lady Ilmena."

She was about to speak in remonstrance, but checking the words that arose to her lips, she gently said:

"Adieu, then, my good Jacobi. The estate on the Lake of Como, which I purchased during my absence, shall become yours. There, in the enjoyment of the loveliest scenery on earth, you shall reap the reward of your noble devotion to the cause of your prince. Think how unimportant were the feeble lives that were sacrificed to secure his safety, and think that your conduct was most praiseworthy. I shall ever, ever regard you as my saviour, and my most devoted friend."

There was bitter emphasis in the tone of his reply.

"You may believe the last, Lady Ilmena, for few men would willingly bear the brand of treachery to the cause they had espoused, at the command of a woman who has by turns frowned or smiled, as best suited her own purposes. I have proved myself the base instrument of your ambition, and with immeasurable self-contempt I leave you for ever, lest my weakness, where you are concerned, should tempt me still farther to degrade myself. Adieu, fair sorceress; I have loved and served you at the cost of everything an honourable man holds dear, and now I go far, far away, hoping never again to see the face which has made me forget all my mother's teachings—all my father's pride."

Before she comprehended his intention the audacious speaker clasped her in his arms, and covered her face with ardent kisses. Suddenly releasing her, he rushed from the room, and in another moment she heard the swift gallop of his steed as it bore him away.

Captain Jacobi had been reared under the same roof with Lady Ilmena, and until her great accession of fortune he had indulged the hope that at some future day she would return the devotion he lavished upon her.

He was a weak and impulsive man, and after joining with the conspirators the fear that some evil might ensue to his idol induced him to unfold to her the whole plot against the Elector. By the exercise of every feminine wile she then induced him to commit the crime of removing the children, that they might no longer be in her way, and at the same time afford her the credit of having saved her lover's life.

The drowning of the young princes was believed to be accidental by all except Lady Ilmena and the priest. He saw that for once his acuteness had deceived him; that the man he had believed bound to the good cause he had so much at heart was but a weak, vacillating fool ruled by a false woman's smile,

and ready at her behest to sacrifice any interest that conflicted with hers.

It was well for Jacobi that he secured his own safety by flight, for more than one of his late partisans had secretly vowed to avenge the murdered children of the Electress, and the sacred cause of justice he had so ruthlessly ruined.

(To be continued.)

MISTAKES IN GRAPE GROWING.

NATURE makes no mistakes, though we may make enough of them both in interpreting her meaning and in our endeavours to turn her from her course. What do we see in closely pruned fruit-trees that are not root-pruned? Simply that they produce enormous grass rods in spite of us, and are shy of fruit.

It is well known that in climates and soils thoroughly adapted to it, as for example in the Madeira and Cape de Verde Islands, and on the volcanic tuffs anywhere in the south of Europe, the grape-vine produces fruit that is truly voluptuous, while its roots are embedded in dry rocky stuff, and have literally only cinders to travel in; so fat roots are not absolutely essential to the production of fat berries. Who can doubt that a vine that is perpetually cut back and restricted as to space far below its natural requirements, must become plethoric by supplies of aliment from the roots, and so manifest some signs of disease proper to a plethoric condition? Cultivators of grapes are invited to consider this point as bearing directly on the results of their labours.

To grow many vines in a house is, as we all know, quite possible, and those who take an interest in the study of varieties will carry to the nicest point possible the crowding of the space in their command, limiting each vine perhaps to one rafter. Physiology teaches that with such a system there must be combined a system of root-pruning, and perhaps the next best thing would be to restrict the roots of each vine to a certain space, instead of allowing them, as is often the case, to ramble far and wide in highly nutritive borders to pick up more sustenance than the leaves can elaborate.

Over-feeding is quite as disastrous in its results as under-feeding, and the happy medium for either plant or animal is to have enough, and no more. We shall never have fine grapes from vines that are gorged with sap, any more than we shall have courageous dogs, fleet horses, or strong and healthy men if either have more food than the circumstances of life require.

INSECT-DEPOSITS OF IRON.—It is well known that some insects are skillful spinners, but it is not known that some of them fabricate iron. A Swedish naturalist, Sjögreen, has published a curious memoir on this subject. The insects in question are almost microscopic; they live beneath certain trees, especially in the province of Smaland, and they spin (like silkworms) a kind of ferruginous cocoons, which constitute the mineral known under the name of "lake ore," and which is composed of from twenty to sixty per cent. of oxide of iron, mixed with manganese, ten per cent. of chloric, and some centimetres of phosphoric acid. The deposits of this mineral may be two hundred and fifteen yards long and from eighteen to thirty inches thick.

ANCIENT BELLS.—The four ancient ecclesiastical bells in the possession of the Primate of Ireland are of great interest. The first is of iron, Clog Mogue is its name, after a Bishop who was born A.D. 555, died A.D. 625; it is beautifully ornamented with silver, and the fragments which remain were used in the administration of oaths in former days. The second is Clog-na-Fullah, of iron, lined inside and out with bronze, riveted at the edges, quadrangular in form, it is one of fifty once owned by St. Patrick, and was also used in administration of oaths and in civil contracts, &c. The third is Barry Gariah, a bronze and quadrangular casting; the fourth is also of bronze, and cast. The care of these bells was generally entrusted to some family, and were relics of great sanctity and esteem.

A LESSON TO ENGLISH TRADES-UNIONS.—For some time past the French have entered into competition with us as ironworkers, having secured a number of first-rate English workmen to act as foremen over native artisans, the superiority of the English workmanship being an admitted fact. Recently a deputation was sent over from an English ironworkers' union to the various French ironworks to get the French artisans to unite for themselves, with the view of getting higher wages and regulating the standard price of labour for the future. The answer which the deputation received was extremely judicious. "We know," say the French workmen, "that we are not such good workmen as you yet,

and iron is dearer here. If we struck for higher wages we could not enter into competition with you, and we should get dismissed, while by staying where we are we learn from you and go into competition with you, and at the time we are getting much higher wages than we should earn as ordinary labourers. We don't want to strike yet—when we have placed ourselves on a perfect equality with you then we shall be able to see what is to be done." English workmen might take a lesson from the prudence and foresight of the French workmen.

FACETIÆ.

A WAS SAYS OF A WOMAN: "To her virtue we give love; to her beauty admiration; and to her hoops the whole pavement."

The entire assets of a recent bankrupt were nine children. The creditors acted magnanimously, and let him keep them.

YOUNG doctors should not grumble because they find it difficult to get into practice. They will be certain to succeed if they only have the patients.

At a recent railroad celebration the following sentiment was given:—"Our mothers—the only faithful tenders who never misplaced a switch."

CHANGING THE TIME.—A person inquired at one of the railway stations what time the 7-45 train would start, and was told at a quarter to eight. "Bless me," he exclaimed, "you are always changing the time on this line."

A FRENCH marquis was riding out one day, when he passed an old priest trotting along contentedly on a quiet donkey. "Ha, ha!" exclaimed the marquis, "how goes the donkey, good father?" "On horseback, my son," replied the priest.

AN APT SMILE.—"Charles, do you really love my daughter?" "You know I do, Mrs. Simkins." "How much do you love her?" "I love her—I love her as hard—as a horse can kick." Mrs. Simkins said, "You may have her, bless you both."

A HATTER told a customer once, when ordering a new hat, that the one he had previously supplied him with was a good one, a statement which the customer disputed. "Why," said the latter, "it must have been a good one, for you cannot deny that you have worn it above two (3) ears."

IMPULSIVE.—On the last occasion Mr. Keon played Louis XI. in Edinburgh, at the Theatre Royal, a devout Irishman sitting entranced in the stalls, after the attendants had proclaimed "The King is dead," exclaimed, "And may the Lord have mercy on his guilty soul!" thinking for the moment that the scene was a real one.

INDIA.—"India, my boy," said an Irishman to a friend on his arrival at Calcutta, "is just the finest climate under the sun; but a lot of young fellows come out here, and they drink and they eat, and they drink and they die; and then they write home to their friends a pack o' lies, and says it's the climate as has killed them."

DECIDED SUPERIORITY.—By a series of interesting experiments, lately made, a woman's tongue has been found capable of moving one thousand nine hundred and twenty times in a minute. Think of that, all ye that argue that woman is inferior to man! Produce a specimen of the masculine gender who can accomplish such a vibration, or yield the point!

SLEEP.—A writer says women require more sleep than men, and farmers less than those engaged in almost any other occupation. Editors, and reporters, and doctors need no sleep at all. Lawyers can sleep as much as they please, and thus keep out of mischief. Clergymen can sleep twelve hours out of twenty-four, and can put their parish to sleep once a week.

MY WASHERWOMAN.—I remember one night going to a masked ball given at the theatre during the carnival. During the evening a young and apparently elegant woman came towards me, attired in a domino and mask, and putting her arm within mine, accosted me thus: "The signor has not found her whom his eyes seek?" Now I was seeking no one in particular, so inferred that I was not speaking to anyone acquainted with me, and I replied: "The signora can jest at my disappointment; does she wish it less?" "Disappointment belongs to most who trust women; to all who trust men." "The signora," I urged, "is too young and lovely to have discovered that herself." "I have not complained; the heart is silent on its own sorrows, signor capitano." I was only lieutenant, but the idea did not displease me. "Signora, if it were in my power you should never have reason to feel sad," I answered. And so this light badinage was continued for some little time. I besought her to tell me who she was, or to unmask,

but this she declined to do, and in return told me so many little matters about myself and my daily habits that I could not imagine how she could possibly have learned them, and became thoroughly intrigued. As she was very obdurate, I wished her adieu, when she promised that if I would stay until the conclusion of the ball she would unmask. For want of something else to do, and also, perhaps, from curiosity, I stayed, and about three in the morning I posted myself at the door to watch the people as they left, and soon espied my *incognita*. She walked up to me with a most coquettish air, raised her mask, and disclosed the not uncommonly visage of—my washerwoman. She was childishly diverted at her success in playing me off—much more than I was myself. The following evening I received a note from another lady, begging me to go to the ball again; but as I was aware that my washerwoman had a dear friend, who was also a clear starcher, I felt sure that the two had concerted another joke at my expense, and judged it advisable to disregard the invitation.—"Reminiscences of an English Cadet in the Austrian Service."

ODE TO THE NORTH-EAST WIND.

"Welcome, wild North-Easter!

Shame it is to see

Odes to every Zephyr,

Not a verse to thee."

So says Mr. Kingsley,

Who appears to find

Something very bracing

In a North-East wind.

For my part, however,

Ere I'd write an ode

To the vile North-Easter,

Why, I'd see it blowed!

Pun.

PREPARED FOR A STORM.—A few nights ago Mr. Bodkins, who had been out taking his glass and pipe, on going home late borrowed an umbrella, and when his wife's tongue was loosened he sat up in bed, and suddenly spread out the parachute. "What are you going to do with that thing?" said she. "Why, my dear, I expected a severe storm to-night, and so I came prepared." In less than five minutes Mrs. Bodkins was fast asleep.

GOOD.—A good joke is told at the expense of a suburban school teacher, who kept after school a youngster who had manifested a great aversion to acquiring any additional learning, and in the course of the reprimand the teacher said: "Now, James, can you tell me one single thing you have learned since the quarter commenced?" "Yes, I have learned one thing." "What is it?" "Well, I've learned where there is a chestnut-tree that none of the fellows know anything about, and I was going there for nuts if you had not kept me after school."

IRISH WIT.—Two Irishmen met one morning. One was very seedy and ragged, with a very bad hat, and was evidently in search of his morning's bitters. The other was attired in shining broadcloth and sported a costly beaver. After exchanging a greeting and some conversation the latter took out a handsome gold watch to compare his time with that of the big clock on the City Hall. "It's a nice watch ye have there," says number one. "Be jabbers," says number two, pulling up his shirt-collar, "an' ye may believe that; but if I'd ha' behaved myself t'yer since I come over I'd be a walkin' round with the town clock in me pocket to-day."

CENSUS OF CATS.—It has been ascertained that there are 43,600 cats in Buffalo. The census was taken by the local editor of the *Commercial*, who went home the other night at a late hour, when the people were in bed and the cats were out. In passing through four streets he counted 899 cats, and presuming that this was a fair average, and knowing the whole number of streets in Buffalo, he readily came to the conclusion above stated. If he made the number of cats four hundred in the streets that he passed through it would have been easier to reckon the aggregate, but he would not tell a lie for one cat, so it stands at just 899.

A GLOUCESTERSHIRE PRESCRIPTION FOR EPILEPSY.—It is related that a clergyman going into the house of a parishioner whose daughter was troubled with epileptic fits was accosted by her mother in a joyous tone: "Oh, sir, Emma has got her ring." The good curate, fearing that the poor girl might have "stooped to folly," and this was an intimation that the swain intended to make an honest woman of her, sought an explanation; which was afforded in the following prescription, which would be useful to those who may be afflicted in like manner: "Why, you see, sir, our Emma has been long troubled with 'the fits,' and she went to the church door, and asked a penny from every unmarried man that went in, till she got twenty-four. She then took them to a silversmith in Glo'ster, who promised to get them changed for 'Sacrament money' (which he said he could easily do, as he

knew one of the cathedral clergy). And with that money, sir, he made her a silver ring; and Emma is wearing it, and has never had a fit since."

SEASONABLE ADVICE.—We recommend our young friends who are anxious to begin the croquet season to wait a little longer. To venture on lawns in the present weather would be to commence an unpleasantly "croaky" season.—Fun.

BRILLIANT DESCRIPTIVE POWERS.—Young Spolker has engaged the lovely Miss Rufus for the next waltz. What would she say if she knew that he (being so bad at catching names, you know) is putting her down on his card as "turn-up nose and carrots?"—Fun.

AN "EVENING" PERFORMANCE.—The *County Times*, under the head of Egham, informed us the other day that "During Lent, service will be held daily in the parish church at 5.30 p.m., and on Friday evenings at 10 a.m." The people of Egham must have a few odd hours a day more than most people, or they must egg'am on in some strange way, so as to extend Friday evening into the next morning.—Fun.

ORTHODOX.

Hunting Friend: "But I thought you made a difference in Lent?"

Conscientious, but Sporting Parson: "So I do—always hunt in black!"—Punch.

NEW MUSIC.—Shortly will be published a companion song to "Riding through the Broom," to be entitled "Driving in the Brougham."—Punch.

ERRORS IN PROBITY.—The small tradesmen of Southwark, and many other places, have some excuse to offer for using short weights and measures. They have not received a classical education, and therefore they can't help making false quantities.—Punch.

THE WORKING-MEN'S ADVISER.—On the stump, at a meeting in Trafalgar Square, Mr. George Potter delivered an oration which, according to a report of it, "he concluded by calling on the working-classes to be up and doing." It is gratifying to find Mr. George Potter giving such good advice to the working classes. They cannot do better than practise early rising and industry. Let them listen to Mr. Potter when he recommends them to be up and doing, but turn a deaf ear to him when he tells them to be up and idling.—Punch.

PIGS OF GREAT PRICE.—The pigs of iron which the dockyards were discovered by Mr. Seely to have been paved with were appraised by the Woolwich officials at only 1*l.* per ton. A much higher estimate of their value, reported by Messrs. George Ryland and Co., is confirmed by a scientific analysis from Dr. Percy. They turn out to be worth from 3*l.* to 4*l.* per ton, and upwards. These pigs of iron may therefore be regarded as a sort of prize pigs. After the name of their discoverer, they have been denominated "Mr. Seely's Pigs." They belong, however, to Government, and seeing the prices at which they are valued, we are justified in saying that the Admiralty have had their pigs driven to a pretty market. For this the nation should be grateful to Mr. Seely, who has saved so much of its bacon.—Punch.

A MUSKET BALL LONGED FOR THIRTY-EIGHT DAYS IN THE BRAIN OF A YOUTH.—*L'Union Médicale* of Paris quotes the *Ves National* of Metz, wherein the following case is related:—"The youth was seven years old, and employed in a shooting-gallery. Just as one of the customers was taking aim with a rifle the boy seized the end of the barrel to stop him; the rifle went off, nevertheless, and it was noticed that the boy had a kind of scratch over the right eyebrow. He went on, however, performing his duties, but soon said he felt unwell, though not enough to require the assistance of a medical man. Full a fortnight afterwards his father called in a surgeon to treat the boy for typhoid symptoms. He used to utter faint cries and groans, and would often shake his head laterally. He died exhausted, and on a post-mortem examination a ball, which had given rise to an abscess, was found in the substance of the brain, where it had remained five weeks."

SWALLOWS IN ALGERIA.—I saw lately a book advertised with the title "A Winter with the Swallows," and having procured a copy, I was surprised to find that the locality of the swallows' winter residence was Algiers. I had always imagined that the supposed winter residence of swallows was somewhere in the centre of Africa, and Rev. H. B. Tristram, in his interesting work entitled "The Great Sahara," states that in that region the Arabs informed him that "for one swallow in winter they have twenty in summer." The natives are perfectly familiar with the fact of the swallows' emigration, as they say they go to visit Timbuctoo, the Eldorado of Arab and swallow." I myself have passed twenty-five successive winters in Algeria, either at Algiers

or Oran, and from repeated observations I found that the swallow arrived on the 6th of March, but an occasional swallow may be rarely observed flitting about in the month of January, if the day be very fair and warm. Swallows and quails, and curlews arrive at Algiers almost simultaneously, although the great emigration of these birds may be put down at the end of March.—G. M.

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

COTTAGE CHIMNEYS.—In building a chimney put a quantity of salt into the mortar with which the intercourses of bricks are to be laid. The effect will be that there will never be any accumulation of soot in that chimney. The philosophy is thus stated: The salt in the portion of mortar which is exposed absorbs moisture every damp day. The soot thus becoming damp falls down the fireplace.

THE GILDING OF PORCELAIN.—A coating of gold, which is brilliant without burnishing, may be imparted to porcelain, by means of a mixture prepared as follows: Thirty-two parts of gold are to be dissolved in aqua regia, containing 128 parts nitric and the same amount of hydrochloric acid, heat being applied. When the solution is complete one and one-fifth part tin and the same amount of butter of antimony are to be added, and, after heat has been applied, the result is to be diluted with 500 parts water. Also sixteen parts sulphur, and the same amount of Venice turpentine, are to be gently warmed until they form a tough uniform dark-brown mass, which is to be thinned with fifty parts oil of lavender. The solution of gold is poured into this; and the mixture being kept warm, it is to be constantly and gently stirred, until a uniform liquid is obtained. On cooling, the water and excess of acid separate; and the resinous mass thus obtained is to be well washed with water, and dried, then thinned with sixty-five parts oil of lavender and 100 parts oil of turpentine; and, having been heated until it becomes of a uniform consistence, five parts basic nitrate of bismuth are to be added to it; after which it is to be left at rest till it is quite clear. The clear portion may then be poured off, and is ready for use. It dries quickly on the porcelain, and the gilding is brought out, by the application of a high heat.

A CHEAP ALARM.

I HAVE fitted an excellent alarm-bell to my bedroom clock, which I find of great use, and which I will describe, if you will allow me, for the benefit of any who may feel disposed to follow my example.

The clock is one of the old-fashioned kind, with long pendulum and chains, that necessitate its being hung up high on the wall; and the whole alarm apparatus consists of a bell, a stick, and a few nails. If the striking-weight be drawn up at, say, ten o'clock p.m., it will be down the wall about 2 ft. at five a.m.; then make a mark on the wall, level with the bottom of the weight, or half an inch lower. Here, a little on one side, drive a nail, with a stick, say, 18 in. long, held on it as on a swivel, the nail working freely in its place, about 2 in. from one end. Your bell must be put together thus:—Rivet one end of a steel stay-bush to the bell; bend the bush into a half-circle; nail the free end of it to a piece of wood 5 in. or 6 in. square; then nail this wood to the other wall, the clock being in a corner of the room, and with another wall to the one it is on running at a right angle with it. Let the bell be secured so as to be, when at rest, 3 in. or 4 in. below the short point of the stick, when the stick is horizontal; raise the bell and hang it delicately on this point; then drive a nail over the long end of the stick, so as to counteract the tendency of the spring to cock it up, and the alarm is made and set. When the clock strikes, say, six, the striking-weight displaces the stick and so liberates the bell, which rings with a loud noise.

This simple contrivance is, I believe, quite original, and few things can surpass it for efficiency—none for cheapness. It may, with a little adapting, be fitted to almost any clock, and set for any time, the time being regulated by the hour at which the weight is wound up over night; and, if properly gauged, will never disappoint. To use a homely simile, it is as gingerly set as a mousetrap, and a slight touch of the clock weights sets it ringing while the clock is striking, and for some seconds after, emitting a thrilling noise that will awaken the soundest sleeper. J. G.

A DISCOVERY of a large quantity of coins of great antiquarian interest has taken place at Auriel (Bouches-du-Rhône). They are about two thousand in number, all of silver, and in perfect preservation. They were turned up in an urn at the depth of nearly a yard, by the owner of the ground while digging.

They are of various sizes, the largest weighing about a quarter of an ounce. What proves their great antiquity is that they are only struck on one side, have no legend, and bear only the head of a man with a helmet, or of a female crowned with a diadem, horses, lions, bulls, &c. Their general appearance indicates that they are of Asiatic origin, and the supposition is that at some remote period they were brought into Gaul by some rich Phœnician of Marseilles, who had retained relations with the cities of Asia Minor and Greece. Some of them offer a great resemblance to the coins attributed to the cities of Ghidus, Lampaca, and Paphos.

MR. T. P. DELME RADCLIFFE, of Hitchin Priory, Herts, presented to the Dean of Winchester on his ninety-second birthday a model of Winchester Cathedral, 3 feet 8 inches in length, the work of a shepherd of Hampshire Downs, who carved it with no other implement than a penknife.

LIFE IS DREARY.

SHOULD trouble and sorrow come upon us,

And sad misfortunes though there be,

Let us think them heaven's blessings—

Blessings that we cannot see.

If life was, to be so dreary—

Why were given the beautiful flowers

That sprinkle every road and hill-side,

Or sweetly bloom within our bowers?

Why have we boasts for every want,

Why birds of sweetest tones,

And why the richly yielding lands

That spread around our homes?

If life was to be so dreary—

Why has man the power of mind

To subject to his wants and wishes

The beasts and birds of every kind?

'Tis the selfish, sinful heart,

Of its own repinings weary,

That ever through life's varying paths

Grooms us with, "Life is dreary." A. D.

GEMS.

It is beauty's privilege to kill time, and in revenge time kills beauty.

It is a dangerous thing to treat with a temptation, which ought at first to be rejected with disdain and abhorrence.

SOME men have an extraordinary power of getting possession of other people's secrets, but small capacity for keeping them. Like sponges, they absorb by contact, and release upon the slightest pressure. They are corkscrews that draw out, but not corks that keep them.

BURIED ALIVE.—At Murville, France, the other day, while the interment of an aged lady was taking place, a noise was heard to proceed from the grave. Upon the body being exhumed it was found to be warm, but without any other sign of life. A medical examination showed that death had occurred at the time of exhumation.

A JARVIS TOWN.—There is a saying that when the sky falls we may catch larks; but it seems that at Dieppe it is unnecessary to wait for that catastrophe, for during this winter 1,255,500 have been brought into town, of which 988,700 were consumed there, and 271,800 forwarded to other parts of France. The average price was 4½ centimes.

EACH kind of climbing plant always twines in one direction, and if an attempt be made to compel it to twine in an opposite direction it invariably results in the death of the plant. On the other hand, if two plants of the same kind be placed together, each one twines in a contrary direction, the spirals crossing one another.

MONUMENT TO THE LATE COSMOROVITCH.—The first stone of a monument to the memory of the late Cosmrovitch has been laid at Nice. It will be raised on the site of the villa inhabited by the Russian Imperial family, and where the young prince died. An immense number of persons were present at the ceremony.

LAND SLIDES IN CALIFORNIA.—A correspondent, writing December 28th, says: "Just now the whole country is very soft from the recent heavy rains that have made travelling very unpleasant, and in many sections impossible, it having rained continuously for over two weeks, during which period our usual fall season supply has fallen. The rain gauge showed a fall of seven inches in twenty-four hours—the heaviest ever known in the country for the period. In the interior the sudden rising of the mountain streams and the rivers has done much

damage. In many places land slides have occurred blocking up the roads, and a great number of bridges and lots of fences have been carried away. These land slides are curious things. Without any warning whatever half a dozen acres of side-hill and forest start suddenly, and carrying everything in their track, deposit themselves in the valley, frequently burying cattle, and not unfrequently buildings."

STATISTICS.

By a return just published it appears that the total issue of bank notes for the month of January last was 165,960,000. For the month of October, 1866, the total issue was 152,692,000.

TAXATION IN THE UNITED KINGDOM.—A return has been issued on this subject. It gives the gross amount of revenue from customs, excise, stamps, land and assessed taxes, and property and income tax in each financial year from 1826-27 to 1865-66. The quinquennial totals are as follows:—1827 to 1831, 263,880,157. 5s. 5d.; 1832 to 1836, 240,461,001. 9s. 3d.; 1837 to 1841, 244,441,279. 13s. 1½d.; 1842 to 1846, 261,408,161. 6s. 8½d.; 1847 to 1851, 271,248,756. 16s. 0½d.; 1852 to 1856 (this includes five years and one quarter), 289,381,040. 15s. 9d.; 1857 to 1861, 289,684,922. 12s. 4½d.; 1862 to 1866, 283,350,891. 10s. 1½d. The population increased from 23,190,529 in the first of the above periods to 29,395,051 in the last period. In the first period the taxation per head was 2½. 5s. 5d., and in the last period 1½. 18s. 6½d.

MISCELLANEOUS.

ACCORDING to the estimate of Sir Charles Lyell there are about two thousand volcanic eruptions every century.

THE sister of Béranger still lives, a nun in the Convent des Oiseaux, at Paris. She is 101 years old, but in good health.

A CENTENARIAN named Merritt has lately died at Gosport, in Hampshire, at the age of 102 years. He was a bird-catcher by trade.

A STATUE of Joan of Arc is to be erected at Compiègne by order of the Emperor, who has taken a great fancy to her of late.

ON March 9 a telegram was forwarded from London to New York and an answer received within four hours and a half.

It has been noticed as a curious fact that there are now five Dukes in her Majesty's Government—viz., the Dukes of Beaufort, Buckingham, Marlborough, Montrose, and Richmond.

HAVANNAH has sent to the Paris Exhibition a specimen of Cuban produce in the shape of a person named Sola, a "mental calculator," whose power of memory is said to be amazing. He solves the most profound arithmetical problems at a glance.

A HARE WITH A TICKET-OF-LEAVE.—A hare was shot on the estate of Largo recently, with a small metal plate attached to one of its legs by means of a copper chain. The plate had the following engraved on it:—"S. T. V. G. 1854."

THE Saxon Government has prohibited the importation of cattle from the Russian prairie countries, in order to prevent the bringing in of the cattle plague, which is well known to have its origin in these prairies.

THERE is now exhibiting at Redcar a cork model of Lincoln Cathedral, made by a Lincolnshire ploughman, which contains the extraordinary number of 1,800,000 old corks, and occupied ten years and a half in building.

THE Turkish Minister of Police, Mohammed Emir Pasha, who has just been "taken up"—to a better world let us hope—has shown that labour does not kill, in a hurry at least, for he was 103 years old, and was in the habit of doing ten hours' work a day. What an encouragement this ought to be for the rising generation and those who think lounging good for the health.

LUXURIANCE IN RAILWAY-TRAVELLING.—From New York to San Francisco is 3,219 miles. Of this distance 1,887 miles may now be traversed by railway, and in less than two years the cars will run from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean, making the journey in five days. That this may be done comfortably trains of carriages will be provided, some of which are fitted up as sleeping-apartments, others as sitting and reading rooms, and others as dining-rooms; so that the traveller may enjoy all the comforts of a good hotel while he is being carried over the Rocky Mountains and the desert-like plains of the Far West.

CONTENTS.

	Page		Page
ALBERTA	577	MISTAKES IN GRAPHS	
SCIENCE	580	GROWING	597
MENTAL AND PHYSICAL		STATISTICS	599
WORK	580	A CHEAP ALARM	599
HOW RIDER DOWNED PRO-		HOUSEHOLD TREASURES	599
CEED	580	GENS	599
THE WASH-WOLF	581	LOVE IS DREAMY	599
THE PARK EXHIBITION	585	MISCELLANEOUS	599
VIRGINIA	585		
GOLDEN FAVOUR	589		
THE FIRST WEDDING	591	OLIVER DARVEL, com-	
WEDDING-DAYS	591	menced in	182
THE ADULTERATION OF		WATER-WOLF, commenced	
BEER	592	in	202
THE HIGHER ORDER	592	ALEXANDRA, commenced in	203
OLIVER DARVEL	595	GOLDEN FAVOUR, com-	
A DARING FEAT	595	menced in	204
FACTS	596	VIRGINIA, commenced in	204

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

FORREST.—"Leopoldist"—The lines are not poetry, nor even rhyme.

STAR OF THE NIGHT.—The river near Winchester is called the Itchen. There is a river Nile in Egypt—the sacred Nile.

EULALIE.—The word programme is pronounced *pro-gram*, the emphasis being upon the first syllable.

G. SIDDON.—The projections at the corners and between windows are termed buttresses, and the mouldings which divide them into stages are called set-offs.

FRANK PERCIVAL, twenty-two, 5 ft. 9 in. in height, fair, and in good circumstances. Respondent must be about the middle height, either fair or dark, and about twenty.

WILLIAM H., twenty-four, 5 ft. 6 in., fair, in a good position, temperate, fond of home, and highly educated. Respondent must be thoroughly domesticated, and well educated.

WILL (of London), not quite eighteen, 5 ft. 2 in., blue eyes, dark brown hair, and handsome. The lady responding must not be more than fifteen or sixteen, and pretty.

A CONSTANT READER.—You can only obtain a situation in the Excise through the interest of a member of Parliament who votes with the Ministry of the time being.

OTEGGIA FLORENT.—For invisible writing, which will only appear on being held to the fire, try simple milk, or the juice of onions.

VIOLET WHITCOURT.—Take our advice, avoid Parisian enamel as a poison. Should you be determined to use it you will find it costly in the extreme.

ELLEN.—Seek a situation without delay. Your remaining with the children will do them but little good and yourself much harm.

G. A. C.—We cannot pass judgment upon "a piece of poetry" without perusing the lines; send them and we will give an opinion.

BRADSH.—It is not proper to say "bad grammar," nor is it proper to say "bad English." (Handwriting would be better without so many flourishes.)

YOUNG AMERICA.—Black spots and pimples in the skin are very common with young people; rub well after washing and you will speedily outgrow them.

AN ANXIOUS INQUIRER.—See our reply to "Young America." (Handwriting not good even for a lad of thirteen; practice well and you will improve.)

A. S. S.—The new dyes sold at all chemists' would, in all probability, serve your purpose; try them, they are very cheap.

ANNE.—An acknowledgment by a man of a woman as his wife made twelve years ago in Scotland constitutes a valid marriage.

NELLIE.—Why wish to make a scent from the pure oil of roses? It is the best scent known. Use a drop or two in oil or pomatum for the hair, or in a drawer for linen.

R. H. B.—To transfer prints from paper to glass soak the prints in mastic varnish, place them on the glass, and when dried rub off the paper with a wet finger.

AGATHA would like to correspond with a nice-looking young man about twenty, good tempered, and with an income of 300*l.* a year.

CARLITHA, eighteen, tall, dark, clear complexion, rosy cheeks, considered very pretty, and will have a fortune when of age; a dark gentleman preferred.

HENRY B., a widower, with a small private property, wishes to correspond with a lady about fifty that has a small income or business of her own.

ROMAN.—By way of reply to this correspondent another correspondent asks us to insert the following: "If 'L. W.' will write to his friend 'M. B. of C.'—'M. B.' may perhaps remove all difficulties in the way of his return."

AJAX, a gentleman by birth and education, twenty-one, 5 ft. 11 in., dark, handsome, aristocratic demeanour, good expectations, and about to proceed abroad, would be happy to correspond with a lady having an independent income.

LILIAN, with an income of 20*l.* per annum, well educated, and unusual, would be glad to correspond with a tall, dark gentleman between twenty and thirty. "Lilian" is very fair, blue eyes, and dark brown hair.

EDITH C., tall, good looking, with a small income, a knowledge of music, thoroughly domesticated, and the certainty of 190*l.* upon her wedding-day, would be glad to correspond with a tall and good-looking gentleman.

ALICE and KATE, two sisters. "Alice," nineteen, tall, dark, good looking, fond of home, and used to business. "Kate" is of medium height, fair, very pretty, and domesticated; neither has a fortune to offer. Respondents must be tall.

OUTAVIUS.—Rest assured there cannot very well be two opinions among intelligent people as to the relative merits of narrow-minded and large-minded men; everybody would give the preference to the latter. But are you sure that the persons to whom you refer are narrow-minded? Do you not mistake concentration of thought and power for narrow-mindedness? Because a man concentrates all his thoughts,

energy, and power upon a few objects, or even upon one object, he is not necessarily a narrow-minded man. The fact that he spreads his thoughts and interests over many things is no proof of superiority; it may simply be an indication of weakness; a stream flowing from the mountains, spreading over a vast expanse, may only create a marsh, but had it been confined in a channel it might have become a sparkling, wholesome river; and the analogy holds good as to the human mind.

COMFORT.—It is no good to attempt to prevent your hair turning gray. The cause is constitutional. The frequent use of bears' grease, or any good pomade, will, however, darken it; all dyes are injurious.

ALICE.—There is no remedy for yellowness of the skin but frequent bathing and attention to the general health, without, indeed, it arises from inaction or disease of the liver, in which case you should consult a medical man.

SOPHIE SHORROCK.—It is impossible for any but a medical man, acquainted with your constitution, to advise as to the pain in your back. (Your handwriting is ladylike, and the colour of the hair you send us is flaxen.)

ORLANDO.—In addressing an audience where there is a presiding officer it is customary to salute him first, and the audience next, by saying, "Mr. Chairman, ladies, and gentlemen."

SITA.—1. By writing to our publisher you can have Vol. VII. of THE LONDON READER forwarded to you to any part of England; the price is four shillings and sixpence. 2. A volume consists of six months' numbers. 3. You may also obtain the "parts."

JOHN.—To make a good mahogany stain boil 1 lb. of madder and 2 oz. of logwood chips in a gallon of water, and rub the articles to be stained with it while hot; when quite dry rub the material with a solution of pearlash, 2 drachms to a quart.

FREEDOM.

The bird, on swift, unfettered wing,
Soars upward, out of sight;
Nor rushing wind nor drenching rain
Can stay its flight.

The river takes its onward way
To meet the waiting sea,
And naught can check its sweeping course,
For it is free.

The winds, restless, rush along,
Nor heed our "Peace, be still;
Unseen they come; as free they go
Their way as will.

The ocean, vast, sublimely vast,
Uniting land to land,
Rolls on in freedom's deep unrest,
Majestic, grand.

Like bird and river, ocean, wind,
Untrammelled, fearless, free,
In mighty thought and mightier deed
The soul should be.

C. L.

THOMAS W. is in search of an accomplished young lady. She must be good looking, if only a "face for a fortune." He is of medium height, dark, black hair, in receipt of about 350*l.* per annum at present, and expects more when he is of age.

A. G. W.—1. You have evidently been duped by a swindler. 2. A notice of six months is required for a yearly tenant, and should end at a quarter-day corresponding with that of the commencement of the tenancy. (Your writing may be improved.)

ADAMANT READER.—The distinguished philanthropist you name is at present in America; a letter, however, would assuredly reach him if addressed to the "buildings" you mention. His place of business in the City of London is, we believe, in Moorgate Street.

ANNE G. and MARIA H. "Annie G." twenty-five, rather tall and slight, black eyes and wavy black hair, and would be a loving wife to a suitable partner. "Maria H." twenty-three, 5 ft. 3 in., dark brown hair, blue eyes, of a loving disposition, and fond of home.

ELLEN.—Take our advice, evince a good spirit in speaking of others; hide all petty, envious, and jealous feelings, and gradually, but surely, you will acquire for yourself a good name; scheming is a dangerous thing; it can do you no good, and might lead to unpleasant results.

T. R., a tailor, thirty-five, 5 ft. 9 in. in height, dark complexion, no whippers, but a monstache. Respondent must not be under twenty-five, not particular as to good looks, so that she is thoroughly domesticated and fond of music; money no object.

DISPART and TANGENT, two sons of the ocean. "Dispарт," twenty-one, 5 ft. 11 in., and good looking. "Tangent," twenty-two, 5 ft. 10 in., black hair, light complexion, blue eyes, and good looking. Respondents must be domesticated, and fond of home; money no object.

ANDREW.—You ask how needles are made. They are composed of steel wire; this wire is first cut by shears, from coils, into the length of the needles to be made; they are then placed in a furnace, afterwards taken out, and rolled backwards and forwards on a table till they are straight; they must then be ground.

FRANK COPELAND.—1. Chloroform would have the effect. Do not, however, try it; it might prove a dangerous experiment. 2. Of course we believe fully in the course we adopt, otherwise we should not do so. At the same time, people are free to take their own course. You know "So many minds, so many opinions."

ELLEN.—To make marking-ink take one drachm of nitrate of silver (lunar caustic), dissolve it in double its weight of water; this forms the ink; then dissolve one drachm of salts of tartar in one ounce of water, wet the linen with this liquid, and when dry it can be written on with the above ink.

CHARLES.—Amateurs should never attempt to stuff any bird smaller than a blackbird, as the larger the specimen the easier it can be accomplished. The process is this: Put a small quantity of wool down the throat to prevent any moisture escaping from the stomach (this is very important, and must never be omitted), take the eyes out, but be careful not to burst them, have some tow cut up small, get a strong wire, rough one point, and turn the other into a bow to hold in

your hand, put some of the tow into the neck, chest, and a little all over the inside of the skin; then open the eyelids and replace the eyes; then mount the bird on a perch fastened to a small board, and arrange the head as you think best; you had better let it dry of itself instead of baking it; keep it free from dust, and in a fortnight it will be all right.

ZINGRA.—1. Desirous as we are to oblige all of our readers and correspondents we really cannot undertake to say that we would accept a story without reading it. 2. If "Zingra" forwards the story we will give her our candid opinion as to its merits. (Handwriting might be greatly improved with more care.)

NIMROD.—1. A church, being a public place of worship, you have a perfect right to enter it to witness a marriage ceremony, that is, providing you are orderly and well-conducted. 2. Get a Lindley Murray's grammar; the abridged edition you may obtain for about one shilling from any bookseller; and, if you watch the book-stalls, for a few pence.

G. W. M.—There is an old theory that the frequent use of vinegar will make you thin, but take our advice and do not try it. If you are obese, and wish to become thin, take plenty of exercise in the open air, be temperate, and avoid as much as possible beer, spirits, milk, and potatoes—far better, however, to let nature take her own course.

DE KATE.—There is no charge for a motto to a coat-of-arms. You can assume any you please; it would not, however, be in good taste to take one at present used by another family. Any ordinary scholar being acquainted with you, and the circumstances of your position, would help you to an appropriate motto.

ELEANOR.—You are right; the custom of sprinkling the hair with gold-leaf has of late years been revived. The material used for the purpose has the elegant appellation of *poudre d'or*; and it will be a hint to be remembered for such as cover fair hair, and have scarcely sufficient to be informed that the Romans achieved the desired result by the use of a kind of soap made of goat fat and ashes of beech-wood.

MAUDE F.—1. Ordinarily, the voyage would be made in eight or ten weeks; much, however, depends upon the weather, and the sailing or steam power of the ships. 2. You may obtain detailed information from any agent—say, the Messrs. Grindlay and Company, Parliament Street, Westminster, who, we are assured, would readily afford you any information.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED:—

LOVELY ONE is responded to by—"A Subscriber to the London Reader," who is suitable to make a home happy, being of a cheerful disposition, domesticated, fair, of middle height, and in receipt of a moderate income.

WILLIAM and ALFRED by—"Nellie" and "Mary," who are thoroughly domesticated. "Nellie" is nineteen, 5 ft. 5 in., dark brown hair and eyes, and good looking; and—"Mary," eighteen, 5 ft. 4 in., black hair, brown eyes, good looking, and of respectable family.

G. J. J. FAIRBY by—"S. A. R." nineteen, 5 ft. 2 in., brown hair and eyes, rather good looking, very fond of home, and thoroughly domesticated, but, like "O. J. J.," has nothing but a loving heart. (Handwriting good and ladylike.)

RICHARD by—"Lizzie," who thinks he would make a good husband, twenty-one, 5 ft. 3 in., brown curly hair, dark blue eyes, and very good tempered; and—"Jennette," who thinks she would make him a good wife, is twenty-two, of medium height, dark brown hair, gray eyes, a kind disposition, and admires sailors very much.

LOVELY by—"Emily X." twenty, fair, even tempered, fond of home, and will make a good wife—"J. H." 5 ft. 4 in. in height, fair, stout, homely, and would strive to make home happy—"Rose Lloyd," who thinks she is just the sort of person to suit him. "Rose" is inclined to be stout, with blue eyes, fair hair, 5 ft. in height, very homely, domesticated, and has a little money in the bank; and—"Lottie," twenty-two, tall, fair, well educated, fond of home, domesticated, and with a great liking for business.

A LOVER OF HOMES by—"Lizzie," twenty, of medium height, good temper, fair, blue eyes, fond of home, and would make a good wife—"Alice," thirty-two, of medium height, highly respectable, good looking, very good tempered, and would make a suitable partner—"E. M. S." nineteen, of medium height, dark, ladylike, very fond of home, music, and children, has no fortune, but a very loving heart—"Alone," a virtuous, cheerful, domesticated person, tall, gentle, possessed of household property and a little money, and has been accustomed to business; and—"Minnie D." who thinks she would be happy with "A Lover of Homes," has not many charms, but a loving heart, and would make him a good wife.

LILY DALE by—"C. S. Lewis." MARY by—"John B." who thinks she is the person he would be happy with. He is a first-class mechanic, and a total abstainer.

S. J. K. by—"A. B.—4." twenty, tall, rather dark; holds a good situation, and has good prospects at the death of a relative.

FLOT by—"A. Z." twenty-three, 5 ft. 10 in., rather fair, handsome, and holds a good position. CORSEY by—"L. F. H." who feels that he could return her love as she would give it, is in the height, complexion, &c., she mentions, and holds a good and responsible post in the City.

KATE by—"Rupert Rodney," who is 5 ft. 5 in., dark hair and eyes, slight moustache, fond of music, and can play various instruments.

M. L. by—"An Artisan," twenty-six, and with good connections.

Part XLVII, for APRIL, is NOW READY. PRICE 6*d.*

*. Now Ready, Vol. VII. of THE LONDON READER. Price 4*s.* 6*d.*

Also, the TITLES and INDEX to Vol. VII. Price ONE PENNY.

N.B.—CORRESPONDENTS MUST ADDRESS THEIR LETTERS TO THE EDITOR OF "THE LONDON READER," 334, Strand, W.C.

†† We cannot undertake to return Rejected Manuscripts. As they are sent to us voluntarily, authors should retain copies.

London: Printed and Published for the Proprietor, at 334, Strand, by J. WATSON.